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# **Practice Standards**

*for*

# **Youth Agreements**

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Ministry for Children and Families

June 2000

## Acknowledgements

While it is not possible to name all of the individuals who have contributed to the development of these standards, the participation of the following groups is acknowledged:

- youth
- community agencies
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Social Development & Economic Security
- Ministry of Attorney General
- Ministry for Children and Families:
  - youth team leaders and staff
  - field staff and Regional Operations
  - Financial Services Branch
  - Child Protection Division
  - Policy Division
  - Mental Health & Youth Policy Section

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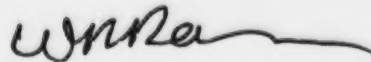
Refer to document number MCF 096.

## A Message from the Director of Child Protection

I am pleased to introduce the Practice Standards for Youth Agreements. This document was created to provide delegated Youth Services workers and supervisors with clear direction on the minimum standards of Youth Agreement practice.

These standards were developed for you on my behalf by the Mental Health and Youth Policy Section in consultation with youth, field staff and multiple other stakeholders inside and outside the Ministry.

I hope that these standards will prove to be useful to you in supporting youth to achieve independence and/or return to their families.



Ross Dawson  
*Director of Child Protection*

June, 2000





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# Introduction

This document sets out the Ministry's practice standards for Youth Agreements. It is intended primarily for staff delegated to complete Youth Agreements.

*Practice Standards for Youth Agreements* are intended to reflect the Ministry's youth-centered approach which focuses on meeting the identified needs of high-risk youth. The intent of this new approach is to provide meaningful and integrated services to high-risk youth who cannot live at home, while building on the strengths and resources that exist in the community and the social service system.

The *Youth Policy Framework* guides the process for working with youth as summarized below (refer to complete Youth Policy Framework for details and further explanation):

Research indicates that the key influences on youth's health and well-being involve the following factors within three areas:

## *Sense of Control*

- valuing and respect
- meaningful participation
- opportunities for self-definition
- knowledge and decision making skills
- creating positive futures

## *Social and Economic Conditions*

- basic needs met (food, clothing and shelter)
- safety and security
- opportunities for learning, work and play

## *Family and Social Connections*

- community, school, mentors, adult relationships, family and cultural connections, and peer relationships

To be effective in meeting the needs of youth, youth services:

- are youth-centered
- require integrated planning and service delivery
- build on family and adult relationships
- involve youth in creating safe environments
- respect culture and beliefs

Under Section 12.2 of the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, the director may enter into a Youth Agreement with a youth in order to support the youth in meeting day-to-day needs and transition to independence when the parent is unable to look after the youth in the home.

The responses available to support youth and families form a continuum, from those that are least disruptive to the youth and their families to those that are more disruptive. On this continuum, Youth Agreements represent a more disruptive response than supporting the youth in the family setting. Youth Agreements must be in the youth's best interests and may be used once less disruptive ways that are available have been attempted.

The purpose of a Youth Agreement includes the development and implementation of a plan for independence that leads to the elimination or reduction of the crisis which led to the youth requiring assistance. The overall goal is to assist the youth to achieve independence or to return the youth to the parent while ensuring the safety and well being of the youth. The plan for independence linked to a Youth Agreement must address what services the youth requires to ensure the youth's safety, and identify any

services required to support the youth as a semi independent person. These agreements are voluntary, and require the agreement of both parties.

### **What are practice standards?**

Practice standards are statements that describe an expected level of performance. The practice standards in this document state what youth, families, service providers and the public can expect of youth services practice regarding Youth Agreements in British Columbia.

## **Legislation that guides Youth Agreements**

Youth Agreements are guided specifically by provisions of the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* (Section 12.2) and *Regulations*, and by the practice standards below.

Youth Agreements are to be administered so that the safety and well being of youth are the paramount considerations. Youth Agreements are also guided by the following principles outlined in Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*:

### **Guiding Principles**

- youth are entitled to be protected from abuse, neglect and harm or threat of harm
- a family is the preferred environment for the care and upbringing of youth, and the responsibility for the protection of youth rests primarily with the parents
- if, with available support services, a family can provide a safe and nurturing environment for a youth, support services should be provided
- the youth's views should be taken into account when decisions relating to a youth are made
- kinship ties and a youth's attachment to the extended family should be preserved if possible
- the cultural identity of aboriginal youth should be preserved
- decisions relating to youth should be made and implemented in a timely manner

### **Service Delivery Principles**

- families and youth should be informed of the services available to them and encouraged to participate in decisions that affect them
- aboriginal people should be involved in the planning and delivery of services to aboriginal families and their youth
- services should be planned and provided in ways that are sensitive to the needs and the cultural, racial and religious heritage of those receiving the services
- services should be integrated, wherever possible and appropriate, with services provided by other ministries and community agencies
- the community should be involved, wherever possible and appropriate, in the planning and delivery of services, including preventative and support services to families and youth

### **Best Interests of Youth**

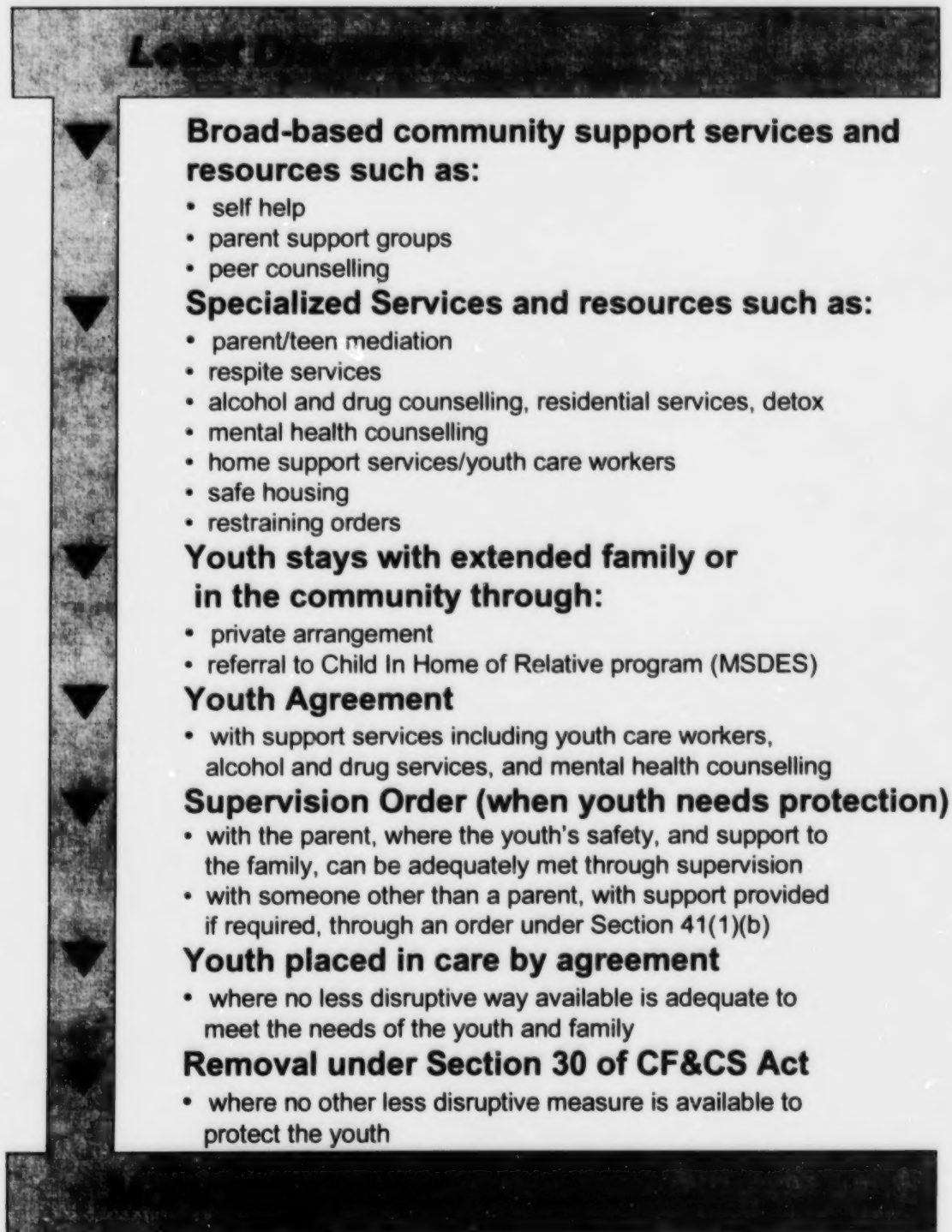
All relevant factors must be considered in determining the youth's best interests, including for example:

- the youth's safety
- the youth's physical and emotional needs and level of independence
- the importance of continuity in the youth's care
- the quality of the relationship the youth has with a parent or other person and the effect of maintaining that relationship
- the youth's cultural, racial, linguistic and religious heritage
- the youth's views
- the effect on the youth if there is delay in making a decision

If the youth is aboriginal, the importance of preserving the child's cultural identity must be considered in determining the youth's best interests.



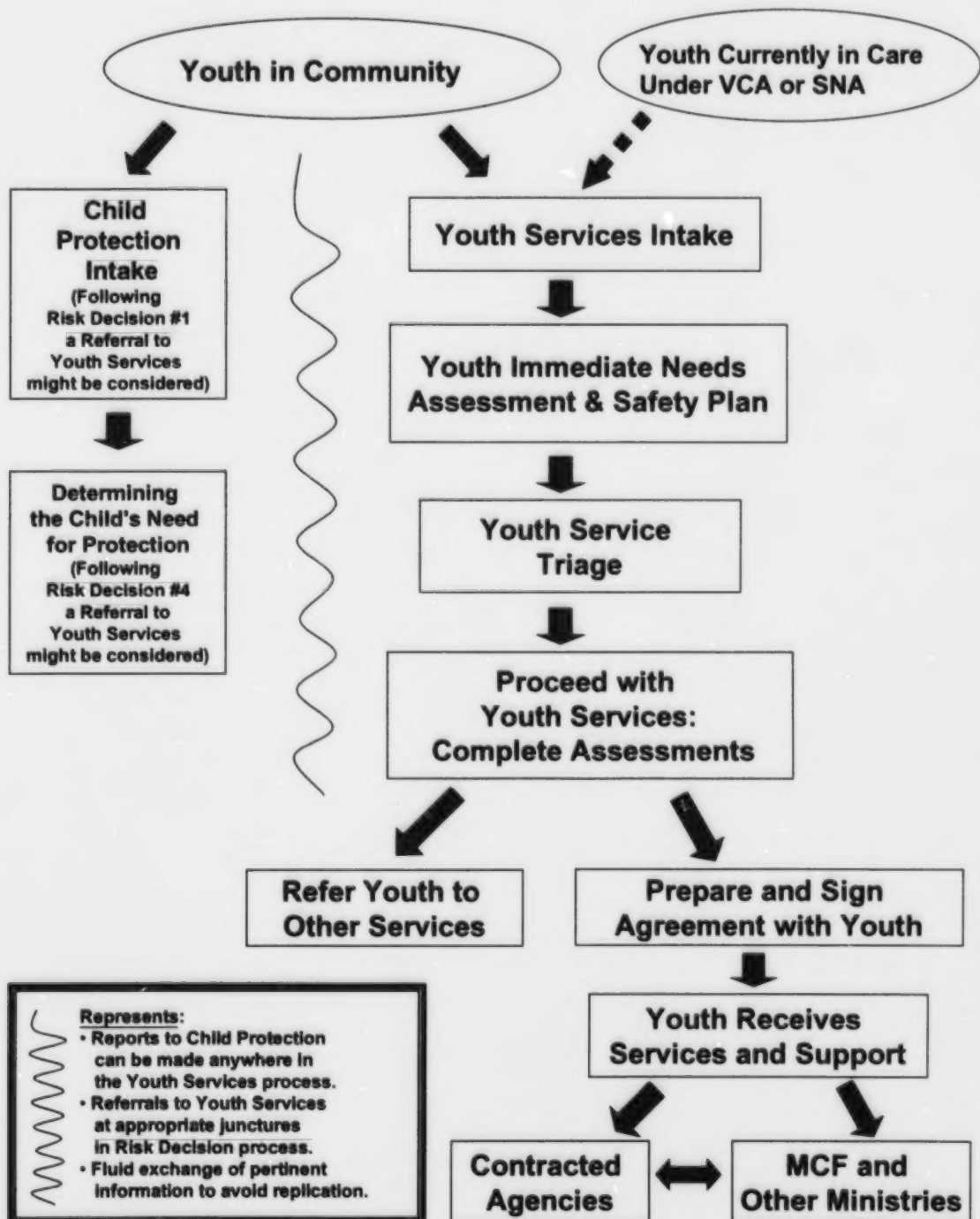
**Figure 1: Continuum of responses available to assist youth and families**



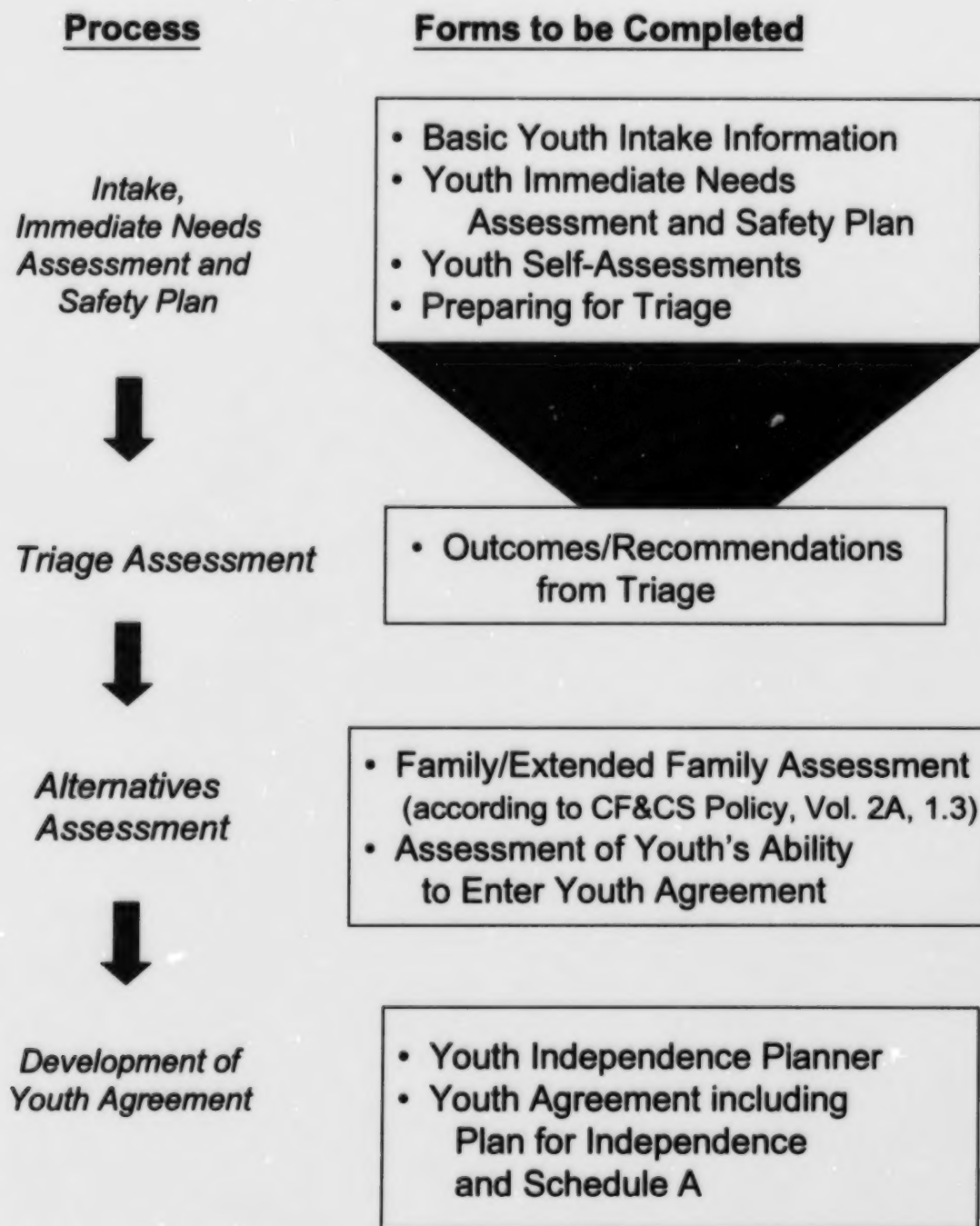


## Figure 2: Youth Agreement Process

Regardless of whether a specialized Youth Services Intake exists within your community/region, in the absence of the immediate need for Child Protection intervention, the Youth Agreement process can be followed in determining appropriate service provision for a youth.



**Figure 3: Youth Assessment Process**



# Preface to Youth Service Practice

## The Youth-Centered Approach

Within the context of the guiding principles, service delivery principles and best interests of youth outlined in the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, a youth-centered approach is recommended for successful working relationships with youth in a Youth Service orientation. Some key aspects of a youth-centered approach are as follows:

- building on existing relationships in which youth have already developed a significant level of trust;
- the development of relationships based on mutual respect, consensus and agreement;
- youth empowerment, participation, accountability, responsibility and commitment; and
- a youth-driven, transparent process that instills ownership.

For more information on strategies for working effectively with youth, refer to the *Youth Policy Framework*.

## Referrals

Youth Services may receive youth referrals from the community, MCF staff, contracted agencies, and youths themselves. Youth participation in Youth Services and Youth Agreements is a result of a youth making a choice and/or agreeing to be involved.

## Program Eligibility

General guidelines for youth being considered for Youth Services (including a Youth Agreement), are that the youth:

- will not be currently living with family or extended family;
- will not be married or living in a marriage-like relationship; and
- will usually be 16 years of age or over, but less than 19 years of age.

The exceptions for considering youth under 16 years of age for Youth Services, are that the youth is pregnant, a parent and/or married. Refer to Practice Standard #8 for more detailed eligibility information. Other youth younger than 16 years of age will usually receive referrals to appropriate services.

Young people 19 years of age or older will usually be referred to adult services, unless they may qualify for agreements with young adults under Section 12.3 of *CF&CS Act*.

## Roles

For the purposes of these practice standards:

- A Delegated Youth Services Worker (a "DYSW") is a social worker employed by the Ministry for Children and Families (or an aboriginal social service agency with delegated youth services), who has completed a Ministry-prescribed Youth Agreement training module, and who has received delegation by passing a subsequent delegation examination based on the training module.
- A Child Protection Social Worker (a "CPSW") is employed by the Ministry for Children and Families (or an aboriginal social service agency with delegated child protection services), has at least current partial Protection Delegation (i.e., Category 2 or Level 13).
- Although the same worker may assume both roles, whenever possible, two different social workers act in the separate roles and responsibilities of DYSW and CPSW for any given youth being served through Youth Services.

## Integrated Case Management and Information Sharing

For information on the use of integrated case management and information sharing among community partners, refer to the *Integrated Case Management User's Guide* and the *Privacy Charter* for Ministry for Children and Families.

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# 1. Youth Intake

There are only two possible intakes to Youth Services that provide protection screens to ensure the safety of a given youth: 1) Youth Services Intake (if developed in your community), and/or 2) Child Protection Intake. In most circumstances, regardless of where intake occurs, Youth Services and Child Protection will be working closely together to determine the service stream and services appropriate for a presenting youth.

**YOUTH INTAKE**

Youth intake into Youth Services must be done by either:

- a CPSW ("delegated Protection social worker") through a Child Protection intake, or
- a DYSW ("delegated Youth Services worker") through a Youth Services intake.

For each youth at the time of intake, the DYSW or the CPSW must decide on one of the following actions:

- DYSW makes report to Protection Services or CPSW proceeds with Protection Services,
- DYSW proceeds with Youth Services or CPSW makes referral to Youth Services,
- referral(s) to community services, or
- no further action with rationale provided.

For each intake, basic youth intake information must be obtained, including a Prior Contact Check and identification (or assisting youth in obtaining required identification).

## Referrals

Unless individuals 19 years of age and over qualify for "Agreements with Young Adults" under Section 12.3 of CF&CS Act, they are referred to adult services.

Youth who are 18 years, 9 months or older, and youth who are married or living in a marriage-like relationship are referred to adult services.

To proceed with youth under 16 years of age through Youth Services for consideration for a Youth Agreement, the youth is married (but not living with spouse), a parent and/or an expectant parent. (Refer to Practice Standard #8 for detailed eligibility information.)

Where a DYSW makes a report to Child Protection or a CPSW refers a youth to Youth Services, pertinent information is exchanged to avoid duplication in information gathering. For details on sharing and transferring electronic file information, refer to the *MCF Systems User Guide*.



## Intake through Youth Services

For each youth at Youth Services intake, the DYSW opens a Youth Service (CS) file, and obtains and verifies basic youth intake information by completing the *Basic Youth Intake Information* form with the youth (that includes copies of identification and a Prior Contact Check).

In completing a Prior Contact Check, a DYSW determines whether:

- the presenting youth is receiving services through Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (MSDES), and/or
- Child Protection is involved (including an active protection investigation underway) focusing on the safety and well-being of any of the following:
  - the youth themselves;
  - the youth's siblings; or
  - the youth's child.

If an active Protection investigation is underway, prior to contacting the youth's family and community members, the DYSW consults with the investigating CPSW to exchange necessary information and to determine a plan of action.

If the youth is receiving services through MSDES, the DYSW consults with a MSDES worker to exchange necessary information and to determine the status and details of such services and benefits.

From the supporting information that accompanies referrals at Youth Services intake, the DYSW attaches pertinent information to Youth Services forms used in the intake and assessment process, and cross-references the supporting information (e.g., "n/a... see attached").

## 2. Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan

### YOUTH IMMEDIATE NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND SAFETY PLAN

Prior to proceeding with Youth Services, the DYSW must complete an assessment of the youth's immediate needs and safety needs and develop a safety plan with the youth by completing the *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan* form.

When repatriating youth, the DYSW must give special consideration to the youth's best interests by assessing the circumstances awaiting youth in returning to their home communities.

If a protective intervention order is required under Section 28 of the *CF&CS Act* while assessing a youth through Youth Services, the order must be obtained through a CPSW.

The DYSW's supervisor must approve all *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plans*.

When opening a Youth Service file, the DYSW must complete an opening summary.

# 1. Youth Intake

There are only two possible intakes to Youth Services that provide protection screens to ensure the safety of a given youth: 1) Youth Services Intake (if developed in your community), and/or 2) Child Protection Intake. In most circumstances, regardless of where intake occurs, Youth Services and Child Protection will be working closely together to determine the service stream and services appropriate for a presenting youth.

PRACTICE STANDARD 1

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## Referrals

Unless individuals 19 years of age and over qualify for “Agreements with Young Adults” under Section 12.3 of CF&CS Act, they are referred to adult services.

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Where a DYSW makes a report to Child Protection or a CPSW refers a youth to Youth Services, pertinent information is exchanged to avoid duplication in information gathering. For details on sharing and transferring electronic file information, refer to the *MCF Systems User Guide*.

## Intake through Youth Services

For each youth at Youth Services intake, the DYSW opens a Youth Service (CS) file, and obtains and verifies basic youth intake information by completing the *Basic Youth Intake Information* form with the youth (that includes copies of identification and a Prior Contact Check).

In completing a Prior Contact Check, a DYSW determines whether:

- the presenting youth is receiving services through Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (MSDES), and/or
- Child Protection is involved (including an active protection investigation underway) focusing on the safety and well-being of any of the following:
  - the youth themselves;
  - the youth's siblings; or
  - the youth's child.

If an active Protection investigation is underway, prior to contacting the youth's family and community members, the DYSW consults with the investigating CPSW to exchange necessary information and to determine a plan of action.

If the youth is receiving services through MSDES, the DYSW consults with a MSDES worker to exchange necessary information and to determine the status and details of such services and benefits.

From the supporting information that accompanies referrals at Youth Services intake, the DYSW attaches pertinent information to Youth Services forms used in the intake and assessment process, and cross-references the supporting information (e.g., "n/a... see attached").

## 2. Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan

### PRACTICE STANDARD 2

#### YOUTH IMMEDIATE NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND SAFETY PLAN

Prior to proceeding with Youth Services, the DYSW must complete an assessment of the youth's immediate needs and safety needs and develop a safety plan with the youth by completing the *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan* form.

When repatriating youth, the DYSW must give special consideration to the youth's best interests by assessing the circumstances awaiting youth in returning to their home communities.

If a protective intervention order is required under Section 28 of the *CF&CS Act* while assessing a youth through Youth Services, the order must be obtained through a CPSW.

The DYSW's supervisor must approve all *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plans*.

When opening a Youth Service file, the DYSW must complete an opening summary.



The DYSW completes the *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan* form with the youth to address the following:

- the youth's level of health and well being.
- the youth's immediate basic needs including food, clothing and shelter.
- the youth's needs for safety and security, including protective intervention orders, police involvement, and legal concerns.
- the youth's involvement in the sex trade (For more information on working with Sexually Exploited Youth, refer to Practice Standard #27).
- the youth's needs if they are a parent or expecting to be a parent.
- the youth's strengths that will build a foundation for further planning.
- the need for immediate referral to services, not limited to Alcohol and Drug Services, Mental Health Services and medical services.
- the youth's involvement with school, training, work and/or rehabilitation.
- the youth's self-assessment of their family.

The DYSW and the youth sign the completed *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan*, and obtain supervisor approval, as specified by supervisor.

## **Repatriating Youth**

For youth from out of province, an emphasis should be put on repatriation of youth back to their parents and family in their home province. Where applicable, contracted youth workers (e.g., Reconnect workers) may be involved to assist with youth repatriation plans. For detailed considerations on repatriating youth, refer to:

- *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2, 3.14 Lost or runaway child (policy)*,
- *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2A, 5.3 Services for unattended and lost or runaway children (procedures)*,
- *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2A, Interprovincial/Territorial Protocol on Children Moving Between Provinces/Territories*, and
- Financial procedures on "Repatriation" in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual*.

## **Immediate Interim Supports**

Based on the *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan*, the DYSW provides immediate interim supports to youth as required that may include:

- hostel fees, meal tickets (P Doc), medication fees, bus tickets/pass, and referral to a contracted youth worker.
- one-time financial supports to assist the youth in paying the fees to obtain necessary out-of-province identification. In-province identification requires no fee dispensed by DYSW.
- when youth are not covered under their parents' medical plans or through MSDES benefits, enhanced medical benefits (which include optical and dental) can be covered by Medical Services Plan.

For details on any of the above, refer to "Immediate Interim Supports" in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual*.

Where a youth requires medical treatment, the attending health care provider determines the youth's capacity to consent to such treatment under Section 16 of the *Infant's Act*.

## Referrals for Clinical Assessment

### PRACTICE STANDARD 3

#### REFERRALS FOR CLINICAL ASSESSMENT

**During the course of developing a *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan*, the DYSW must consider the need for a clinical assessment:**

- made according to the presenting needs and readiness of the given youth.
- made with the youth's consent.

Referral for a clinical assessment is done for the purposes of identifying the unique needs of a youth, and is completed by a clinician who has expert knowledge or skills in a specialized area of service, such as alcohol and drug, mental health or physical health issues. The role of the DYSW is:

- identification and brief intervention to ensure safety and to motivate youth and their families to access appropriate services from alcohol and drug counselors, mental health clinicians, and medical physicians.
- to provide input into case planning and to support the youth to do their part as prescribed in treatment.

Based on the information and needs presented by the youth in the *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan*, the DYSW makes informed case-specific referrals as required. By doing so, the DYSW ensures that limited services and resources are appropriately utilized and a discipline-specific focus is maintained, especially with those resources targeted to youth who have multiple factors that place them at high risk.

Youth are not automatically referred to alcohol and drug or mental health counselors simply based on their consideration for Youth Services or a Youth Agreement.

## Preparing for Youth Services Triage

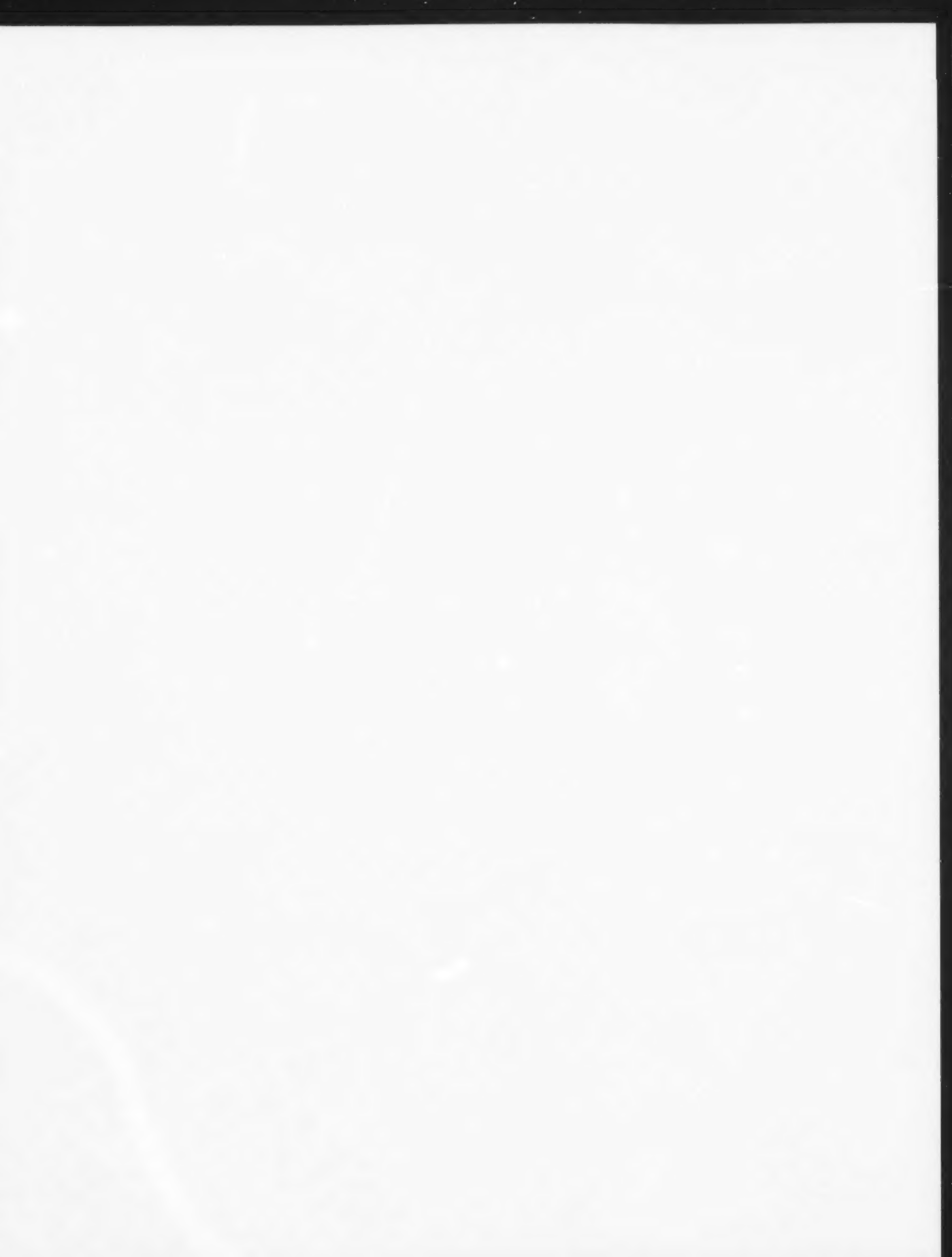
### PRACTICE STANDARD 4

#### PREPARING FOR TRIAGE

**Following completion of a *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan* and in consultation with the youth, the DYSW must consult with pertinent family members and others involved with the youth to gather information that supports integrated case management decisions at the Youth Service Triage by completing the *Preparing for Triage* form.**

The DYSW prepares for the Youth Services Triage by:

- first requesting from the youth, the names of family, extended family and others involved with the youth that may be contacted to provide supporting information around their current circumstances.
- recording the information gathered from youth and family contacts using case notes.
- summarizing information gathered from youth and family contacts on the *Preparing for Triage* form.
- requesting the youth to complete the *Youth's Self-Assessment of Family* form.
- requesting the youth to complete the *Self-Assessment - Sexual Exploitation* form, only if the youth has indicated involvement with sexual exploitation.



## Referrals for Clinical Assessment

### PRACTICE STANDARD 3

#### REFERRALS FOR CLINICAL ASSESSMENT

During the course of developing a *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan*, the DYSW must consider the need for a clinical assessment:

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## Preparing for Youth Services Triage

### PRACTICE STANDARD 4

#### PREPARING FOR TRIAGE

Following completion of a *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan* and in consultation with the youth, the DYSW must consult with pertinent family members and others involved with the youth to gather information that supports integrated case management decisions at the Youth Service Triage by completing the *Preparing for Triage* form.

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- summarizing information gathered from youth and family contacts on the *Preparing for Triage* form.
- requesting the youth to complete the *Youth's Self-Assessment of Family* form.
- requesting the youth to complete the *Self-Assessment - Sexual Exploitation* form, **only if** the youth has indicated involvement with sexual exploitation.



After a youth completes each self-assessment, the DYSW provides the youth with opportunities to discuss issues that may have arisen for the youth through the process of completing the self-assessments.

The DYSW uses and incorporates supporting information that has accompanied Youth Service referrals into the information prepared for and presented to Youth Services Triage.

The DYSW and the youth establish a time for the next appointment and agree on actions to prepare for the next meeting.

### 3. Youth Service Triage

#### PRACTICE STANDARD 5

##### YOUTH SERVICE TRIAGE

All youth who are being considered for Youth Services must be triaged within seven calendar days of Youth Service intake into:

- a Protection Services stream; **or**
- a Youth Services stream **with** Protection involvement; **or**
- a Youth Services stream **without** Protection involvement.

For each youth, a CPSW must complete risk decisions as required using *The Risk Assessment Model for Child Protection in BC* and the *Practice Standards for Child Protection*.

Through involving the following participants in a Youth Service Triage, a collaborative decision must be made to determine which of the three service streams is most appropriate to the youth's needs:

- the youth;
- a DYSW;
- a CPSW;
- other professionals who provide clinical consultation and/or client information to support decision-making based on the presenting needs of the youth.

To document the outcomes and recommendations from Triage, the DYSW completes the *Outcomes/Recommendations from Triage* form.

Youth receive appropriate referrals to services regardless of the outcome of the Triage Assessment.

### Outcomes of Triage Assessment

#### Outcome #1 - Protection Services Stream

- The CPSW determines that the circumstances of the youth warrant a Protection investigation to determine whether the youth is in need of protection, and/or that the youth's best interests are better served through Protection and Family Services.
- A Protective Family Service file is opened.
- The Youth Service (CS) file remains open.
- The CPSW assesses protection concerns regarding other children in the youth's family using *The Risk Assessment Model for Child Protection in BC* and the *Practice Standards for Child Protection*.
- If Protection stream is chosen for a youth, *Practice Standards for Youth Agreements* **no longer** apply.



The DYSW and the youth establish a time for the next appointment and agree on actions to prepare for the next meeting.

## YOUTH SERVICE TRIAGE

- the youth;
- a DYSW;
- a CPSW;
- other professionals who provide clinical consultation and/or client information to support decision-making based on the presenting needs of the youth.

- The CPSW determines that the circumstances of the youth warrant a Protection investigation to determine whether the youth is in need of protection, and/or that the youth's best interests are better served through Protection and Family Services.
- A Protective Family Service file is opened.
- The Youth Service (CS) file remains open.
- The CPSW assesses protection concerns regarding other children in the youth's family using *The Risk Assessment Model for Child Protection in BC* and the *Practice Standards for Child Protection*.
- If Protection stream is chosen for a youth, *Practice Standards for Youth Agreements* **no longer** apply.

## **Outcome #2 – Youth Services Stream with Protection Involvement**

- The CPSW determines that the circumstances warrant a Protection investigation regarding the protection needs of the youth, the youth's siblings, and/or the youth's child(ren), and determines using integrated case management and based on clinical consultation and/or client information, that it is in the youth's best interests to:
  - provide youth services,
  - consider a Youth Agreement, and
  - maintain involvement of a CPSW to ensure a protection risks are addressed.
- The CPSW opens a Protective Family Service file, and applies the *Practice Standards for Child Protection* as appropriate for Child Protection involvement.
- The Youth Service (CS) file remains open.
- The DYSW consults with the CPSW regarding:
  - possible revisions to the Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan previously developed with the youth, and
  - further contact with family and the coordination of a more comprehensive family assessment.
- The DYSW proceeds with considering alternatives with the youth.

## **Outcome #3 - Youth Services Stream without Protection Involvement**

- The CPSW determines that the circumstances do not warrant a Protection investigation, or that the youth is **not** in need of protection as per the *Practice Standards for Child Protection*, and determines using integrated case management and based on clinical consultation and/or client information, that it is in the youth's best interests to provide youth services and consider a Youth Agreement.
- The Youth Service (CS) file remains open.
- The DYSW continues according to the Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan and proceeds with considering alternatives with the youth.

## **Linkages to Adult Services**

For youth between 18 and 19 years of age in a Youth Services stream, the DYSW considers linkages with adult services.

## **Integrated Case Management and Information Sharing**

For more information on the use of integrated case management practice in the Youth Service Triage and information sharing among community partners, refer to the *Integrated Case Management User's Guide* and the *Privacy Charter* for Ministry for Children and Families.



## 4. Deciding Method of Providing Youth Services

The remainder of the *Practice Standards for Youth Agreements* apply to youth in a Youth Services stream with or without Protection involvement.

### Assessing Alternatives

Practice Standards for Youth Agreements

#### ASSESSING ALTERNATIVES

Before entering into a Youth Agreement, all available alternatives to providing services to a youth under a Youth Agreement must be considered including repatriation, reunification or placement with extended family.

For all youth who reach the point of assessing alternatives, a further family assessment must be completed according to *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2A, 1.3, Family Assessment*.

Where a youth has been determined as an outcome of Youth Services Triage to be in the Youth Services stream with Protection involvement, the DYSW must consult with the CPSW involved with the family to determine a collaborative approach to conducting a family assessment.

Information supporting decisions to provide alternative services, or to consider a youth for a Youth Agreement must be documented on file.

Services are provided as appropriate to meet the youth's and family's needs when repatriation, reunification or placement with extended family is determined to be a viable option. The DYSW must give special consideration to the youth's best interests by assessing the circumstances that may be awaiting youth returning to their home communities.

If the youth cannot be reunited with family, live with extended family, and a Youth Agreement is not in the youth's best interests, the DYSW must make a report to Child Protection.

The DYSW considers all ministry and community/family resources and services available to meet the youth's and family's needs prior to considering a Youth Agreement. The continuum of available alternatives is shown in Figure 1.

#### Repatriation as an Alternative

For youth from out of province, an emphasis should be put on repatriation of youth back to their parents and family in their home province. Where applicable, contracted youth workers (e.g., Reconnect workers) may be involved to assist with youth repatriation plans. For detailed considerations, refer to:

- *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2, 3.14 Lost or runaway child (policy)*,
- *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2A, 5.3 Services for unattended and lost or runaway children (procedures)*,
- *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2A, Interprovincial/Territorial Protocol on Children Moving Between Provinces/Territories*, and
- financial procedures on "Repatriation" in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual*.

## Living with Family/Extended Family as an Alternative

When the DYSW makes a preliminary determination from information collected to date and from family contacts that the youth may be able to be reunited with their family or to live with a member of the extended family, the DYSW completes a further family/extended family assessment according to *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2A, 1.3 Family Assessment*. If returning the youth to family/extended family is a viable option following the "family assessment", the DYSW refers to Family Support Services with recommendations for services based upon the identified needs of the youth and family.

## Assessing Youth's Ability to Enter a Youth Agreement

Throughout the process of working with the youth and gathering information to support planning, the DYSW better assesses the youth against the ability and eligibility requirements necessary for entering a Youth Agreement.

### PRACTICE STANDARD *Family/Extended Family Assessment*

#### YOUTH'S ABILITY TO ENTER INTO A YOUTH AGREEMENT

Prior to proceeding toward a Youth Agreement, the DYSW must confirm the presence of the following indicators:

- the youth is in crisis, and/or requires supports to make a successful transition to adulthood and/or is in need of protection;
- the continuing circumstances of family members prevent the youth from being cared for in the home of either a parent or a relative;
- through completing *Assessment of Youth's Ability to Enter Youth Agreement* form, the youth:
  - is capable of understanding the nature and consequences of a Youth Agreement;
  - demonstrates ability to fulfill obligations under an agreement;
  - demonstrates readiness to take action to manage risks in their life/environment, to live independently, and to participate in a realistic plan for independence; and
  - is in agreement with proceeding toward a Youth Agreement.
- available services are adequate to address the youth's need for protection, and to help maintain or restore a safe, stable youth environment; and
- a Youth Agreement is in the youth's best interests (refer to list of factors on pages 2 & 3).

If the youth cannot be reunited with family, live with extended family, and a Youth Agreement is not in the youth's best interests, the DYSW must make a report to Child Protection.

## 4. Deciding Method of Providing Youth Services

The remainder of the *Practice Standards for Youth Agreements* apply to youth in a Youth Services stream with or without Protection involvement.

### Assessing Alternatives

#### ASSESSING ALTERNATIVES

Before entering into a Youth Agreement, all available alternatives to providing services to a youth under a Youth Agreement must be considered including repatriation, reunification or placement with extended family.

For all youth who reach the point of assessing alternatives, a further family assessment must be completed according to *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2A, 1.3, Family Assessment*.

Where a youth has been determined as an outcome of Youth Services Triage to be in the Youth Services stream with Protection involvement, the DYSW must consult with the CPSW involved with the family to determine a collaborative approach to conducting a family assessment.

Information supporting decisions to provide alternative services, or to consider a youth for a Youth Agreement must be documented on file.

Services are provided as appropriate to meet the youth's and family's needs when repatriation, reunification or placement with extended family is determined to be a viable option. The DYSW must give special consideration to the youth's best interests by assessing the circumstances that may be awaiting youth returning to their home communities.

If the youth cannot be reunited with family, live with extended family, and a Youth Agreement is not in the youth's best interests, the DYSW must make a report to Child Protection.

The DYSW considers all ministry and community/family resources and services available to meet the youth's and family's needs prior to considering a Youth Agreement. The continuum of available alternatives is shown in Figure 1.

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- financial procedures on "Repatriation" in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual*.

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When the DYSW makes a preliminary determination from information collected to date and from family contacts that the youth may be able to be reunited with their family or to live with a member of the extended family, the DYSW completes a further family/extended family assessment according to *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2A, 1.3 Family Assessment*. If returning the youth to family/extended family is a viable option following the "family assessment", the DYSW refers to Family Support Services with recommendations for services based upon the identified needs of the youth and family.

## Assessing Youth's Ability to Enter a Youth Agreement

Throughout the process of working with the youth and gathering information to support planning, the DYSW better assesses the youth against the ability and eligibility requirements necessary for entering a Youth Agreement.

### PRACTICE STANDARD 7

#### YOUTH'S ABILITY TO ENTER INTO A YOUTH AGREEMENT

Prior to proceeding toward a Youth Agreement, the DYSW must confirm the presence of the following indicators:

- the youth is in crisis, and/or requires supports to make a successful transition to adulthood and/or is in need of protection;
- the continuing circumstances of family members prevent the youth from being cared for in the home of either a parent or a relative;
- through completing *Assessment of Youth's Ability to Enter Youth Agreement* form, the youth:
  - is capable of understanding the nature and consequences of a Youth Agreement;
  - demonstrates ability to fulfill obligations under an agreement;
  - demonstrates readiness to take action to manage risks in their life/environment, to live independently, and to participate in a realistic plan for independence; and
  - is in agreement with proceeding toward a Youth Agreement.
- available services are adequate to address the youth's need for protection, and to help maintain or restore a safe, stable youth environment; and
- a Youth Agreement is in the youth's best interests (refer to list of factors on pages 2 & 3).

If the youth cannot be reunited with family, live with extended family, and a Youth Agreement is not in the youth's best interests, the DYSW must make a report to Child Protection.



## Assessing Eligibility for a Youth Agreement

### PRACTICE STANDARD 8

#### YOUTH'S ELIGIBILITY TO ENTER INTO A YOUTH AGREEMENT

Prior to entering into a Youth Agreement, the DYSW must verify that the youth meets the following eligibility criteria, and place documentation supporting eligibility in the youth's file:

- The youth must be 16 years of age or over, but under 19 years of age,  
or  
if the youth is younger than 16 years of age, then the youth must be married (but living with spouse), a parent and/or expecting to be a parent.
- Two of the following high-risk behaviors are present and confirmed through pertinent contacts/referrals:
  - addiction or severe substance misuse;
  - significant behavioral or mental health disorder;
  - involvement in the sex trade;
  - absolute or relative homelessness, and does not attend school, training, therapy or work.

Prior to entering a Youth Agreement with a youth who is 18 years or older, the DYSW must determine whether the youth's best interests may be better served through linkage to adult services, rather than through a Youth Agreement.

An initial agreement must not be made with a youth who is 18 years, 9 months, or older.

#### Verifying Identity and Age

To verify the youth's identity and age, the DYSW obtains copies of Birth Certificate, and/or BC Identification Card.

#### Marital Status

Youth who are married and live with their spouse, and youth who cohabit in a marriage-like relationship are referred to adult services (and Family Services for dependent children). For more information on "marriage-like relationships", refer to Practice Standard #26.

For a youth who is under 16 years of age and presents themselves as legally married (and not living with spouse) for eligibility purposes, the DYSW verifies the youth's marital status through obtaining a copy of Certificate of Marriage.

#### Parental Status

For a youth who is under 16 years of age and presents themselves as a parent, the DYSW verifies the youth's parental status by obtaining a copy of their child's Birth Certificate.



## Assessing Eligibility for a Youth Agreement

### PRACTICE STANDARD 8

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#### Parental Status

For a youth who is under 16 years of age and presents themselves as a parent, the DYSW verifies the youth's parental status by obtaining a copy of their child's Birth Certificate.

## **Collateral Checks**

The DYSW completes collateral checks to verify youth needs including: pregnancy, addiction or substance misuse, significant behavioral or mental health disorder, involvement in the sex trade, homelessness and/or non-attendance at school, training, therapy or work.

In performing collateral checks, the DYSW establishes and places on file current information and documentation essential to:

- understand the youth's condition or circumstances;
- determine whether or not the youth is actively engaged or willing to engage in activities that ameliorate risks or improve their condition or circumstances;
- substantiate the youth's eligibility for a Youth Agreement.

The responsibility to determine eligibility of the youth for a Youth Agreement lies with DYSW's, not supporting professionals (e.g., Alcohol and Drug counselors or Mental Health clinicians) who provide assessment information essential to the DYSW's inquiries in determining eligibility of the youth.

For ease of access to information about a youth through collateral checks, other professionals most often will want either to consult with the youth first themselves, or to see a written release of information from the youth.

## **Behavioural or Mental Health Disorder**

A youth is confirmed to have a significant behavioral or mental health disorder if the youth currently or at any time during the past year has had a diagnosable mental, behavioural, or emotional disorder of sufficient duration to meet diagnosable criteria specified with the DSM-IV.

In considering a referral for a mental health assessment for purposes of confirming eligibility, the youth's behavioural or emotional disorder will have resulted in functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits the child's role or functioning in family, school, or community activities.

## **Addictions and Substance Misuse**

Youth whose behaviour is considered high risk from an alcohol and drug perspective exhibit one or more of the following behaviours:

- drinking or using drugs daily or 3 to 4 days per week;
- bingeing (using continuously for several days in a row);
- multiple substance use;
- using drugs by injection;
- severe and/or chronic alcohol and/or other drug use;
- use of alcohol and other drugs to deal with the impact of their current situation or past experiences; or
- associations with others (for friendship, recreation, support, etc.) which are characterized by alcohol and other drug use.

## **Involvement in the Sex Trade**

Supporting information that confirms a youth's sexual exploitation or involvement in the sex trade may include a completed *Self-Assessment – Sexual Exploitation* and information from contacts that the youth has volunteered. For more information on sexually exploited youth, refer to Practice Standard #27.



## Homelessness

*Absolute homelessness* means that a youth is living with no physical shelter.

*Relative homelessness* means that a youth is living in a place that does not meet minimum health and safety standards, including protection from the elements, security of tenure, personal safety and affordability, and includes youth who rely on emergency shelters and hostels for accommodation.

## Summarizing Eligibility

The DYSW confirms the youth's eligibility to enter into a Youth Agreement through reviewing supporting documentation and case notes on the youth's file, completing the summary on the *Assessment of Youth's Ability to Enter Youth Agreement* form, and signing the form with the youth.

## Youth Receiving Income Assistance through MSDES

Youth who are receiving Income Assistance through Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security can receive additional "wrap around" youth services through a Youth Agreement, provided they meet other eligibility criteria. The DYSW verifies through Prior Contact Check (PCC) to determine if the youth is receiving Income Assistance for Minors. Refer to Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual* for specific financial directions and procedures regarding youth receiving Income Assistance for Minors.

## Considering Youth from Voluntary Care or Specials Needs Agreement

### PRACTICE STANDARD 9

#### CONSIDERING YOUTH FROM VCA'S AND SNA'S

Prior to considering a Youth Agreement for a youth who is currently in care under a Voluntary Care Agreement (VCA) or a Specials Needs Agreement (SNA),

- a service stream in the youth's best interests must be determined collaboratively through a Youth Services Triage.
- all available alternatives must be considered.
- the youth must meet eligibility and ability requirements for entering a Youth Agreement.

If a Youth Agreement is determined to be in the best interests of a youth currently in a VCA/SNA after considering all available alternatives and eligibility/ability, a collaborative plan must be developed with the youth, the youth's parent(s), the referring social worker, the DYSW and other pertinent individuals that supports the youth's needs during transition from a VCA or SNA to a Youth Agreement.

When considering a Youth Agreement for youth, who are in care under a Voluntary Care Agreement (VCA) or Specials Needs Agreement (SNA), the DYSW:

- Proceeds through the intake and assessment process as outlined in Practice Standards #1 to #5 as a framework to review the youth's situation and needs.
- Consults with the youth's referring social worker and requests supporting information to be incorporated into the Youth Services intake and assessment process leading up to the Youth Services Triage.

- If a Youth Services stream is chosen, enters into a discussion with the youth, family and extended family to determine a service plan in the youth's best interests, following the practices and procedures as outlined in Practice Standard #6.
- Documents the determination and supporting information that the youth cannot be reunited with their family or live with a member of the extended family.
- Proceeds with completion of the *Assessment of Youth's Ability to Enter Youth Agreement* form.

### **Transition Plan from VCA/SNA to a Youth Agreement**

In most cases, a reasonable period of time to develop and implement a transition plan and make arrangements for a youth moving from a VCA or SNA to a Youth Agreement is 4 to 6 weeks. One aspect of making arrangements is to notify the local Placement Review Committee.

## **5. Preparing for an Agreement**

### **Preparing for a Plan for Independence**

#### **PRACTICE STANDARD 10**

##### **PREPARING FOR A PLAN FOR INDEPENDENCE**

In preparing for a *Plan for Independence*, the DYSW must review the following information pertaining to the youth:

- all Youth Service assessment information gathered to this point;
- the *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan*
- results of alcohol & drug and/or mental health referrals and/or ongoing counseling;
- relevant education, psychological and medical reports;
- information provided by Youth Justice workers; and
- relevant prior contact check (PCC) information that may affect service decisions.

Prior to completing a *Plan for Independence*, the youth must complete the indicated portions of a *Youth Independence Planner*, and the DYSW must review the *Youth Independence Planner* with the youth once the youth has completed their portions.

In preparing for a *Plan for Independence*, the DYSW consults and works collaboratively with the youth and other involved professionals in gathering the relevant information as listed above that supports planning decisions and places the relevant information in the Youth Service (CS) file.

### **Youth Independence Planner**

The *Youth Independence Planner* is a longer-term service plan workbook that captures both short-term and long-term goals of the youth and is used on an ongoing basis with the youth through subsequent Youth Agreements.

The DYSW provides the youth with a *Youth Independence Planner* and addresses assistance the youth may require to complete the workbook. A youth with low literacy levels could have a friend, family member or contracted youth worker assist them in the completion of the workbook.

## Homelessness

*Absolute homelessness* means that a youth is living with no physical shelter.

*Relative homelessness* means that a youth is living in a place that does not meet minimum health and safety standards, including protection from the elements, security of tenure, personal safety and affordability, and includes youth who rely on emergency shelters and hostels for accommodation.

## Summarizing Eligibility

The DYSW confirms the youth's eligibility to enter into a Youth Agreement through reviewing supporting documentation and case notes on the youth's file, completing the summary on the *Assessment of Youth's Ability to Enter Youth Agreement* form, and signing the form with the youth.

## Youth Receiving Income Assistance through MSDES

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- all available alternatives must be considered.
- the youth must meet eligibility and ability requirements for entering a Youth Agreement.

If a Youth Agreement is determined to be in the best interests of a youth currently in a VCA/SNA after considering all available alternatives and eligibility/ability, a collaborative plan must be developed with the youth, the youth's parent(s), the referring social worker, the DYSW and other pertinent individuals that supports the youth's needs during transition from a VCA or SNA to a Youth Agreement.

When considering a Youth Agreement for youth, who are in care under a Voluntary Care Agreement (VCA) or Specials Needs Agreement (SNA), the DYSW:

- Proceeds through the intake and assessment process as outlined in Practice Standards #1 to #5 as a framework to review the youth's situation and needs.
- Consults with the youth's referring social worker and requests supporting information to be incorporated into the Youth Services intake and assessment process leading up to the Youth Services Triage.

- If a Youth Services stream is chosen, enters into a discussion with the youth, family and extended family to determine a service plan in the youth's best interests, following the practices and procedures as outlined in Practice Standard #6.
- Documents the determination and supporting information that the youth cannot be reunited with their family or live with a member of the extended family.
- Proceeds with completion of the *Assessment of Youth's Ability to Enter Youth Agreement* form.

### **Transition Plan from VCA/SNA to a Youth Agreement**

In most cases, a reasonable period of time to develop and implement a transition plan and make arrangements for a youth moving from a VCA or SNA to a Youth Agreement is 4 to 6 weeks. One aspect of making arrangements is to notify the local Placement Review Committee.

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- relevant prior contact check (PCC) information that may affect service decisions.

Prior to completing a *Plan for Independence*, the youth must complete the indicated portions of a *Youth Independence Planner*, and the DYSW must review the *Youth Independence Planner* with the youth once the youth has completed their portions.

In preparing for a *Plan for Independence*, the DYSW consults and works collaboratively with the youth and other involved professionals in gathering the relevant information as listed above that supports planning decisions and places the relevant information in the Youth Service (CS) file.

### **Youth Independence Planner**

The *Youth Independence Planner* is a longer-term service plan workbook that captures both short-term and long-term goals of the youth and is used on an ongoing basis with the youth through subsequent Youth Agreements.

The DYSW provides the youth with a *Youth Independence Planner* and addresses assistance the youth may require to complete the workbook. A youth with low literacy levels could have a friend, family member or contracted youth worker assist them in the completion of the workbook.



## Plan for Independence

### PRACTICE STANDARD #11

#### PLAN FOR INDEPENDENCE

A *Plan for Independence* must be completed prior to entering into a Youth Agreement.

The *Plan for Independence* must be based on the *Youth Independence Planner*, assessment documentation and relevant information outlined in Practice Standard #10, and must identify:

- how risks to the youth's safety and well-being will be addressed, eliminated or reduced, and
- how the youth's long term goals for transition to independence will be addressed through a *Plan for Independence*.

A *Plan for Independence* must describe the behavioural commitments of the youth, the responsibilities and promised acts of the youth and the director with any relevant timelines, as well as address the following areas:

- a place to live;
- family and friends;
- health: physical, mental, and alcohol & drugs issues;
- education/ meaningful work;
- social/ recreational/ cultural/ spiritual/religious/linguistic (in the case of aboriginal youth, information necessary to support and preserve the youth's aboriginal identity);
- legal;
- financial; and
- other areas, including safety issues.

Regular monitoring meetings must be scheduled within the *Plan for Independence*.

The specific roles and responsibilities of the youth and other workers involved with youth must be clearly described within the monitoring sections of the *Plan for Independence*.

Although home visits by contracted youth workers or the DYSW may be more frequent in a *Plan for Independence*, home visits conducted by the DYSW must meet the minimum standards prescribed in Practice Standard #12.

If the youth is in the Youth Services stream with Protection involvement, a CPSW must review and sign off the *Plan for Independence*.

A *Plan for Independence* is the core clinically-focused document within a Youth Agreement that details the services and interventions that will meet the current needs and goals of a youth during the course of the Youth Agreement. The DYSW supports the youth in selecting attainable short-term goals from their *Youth Independence Planner* to be addressed in their upcoming *Plan for Independence*.



# Plan for Independence

## PRACTICE STANDARD 11

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- how risks to the youth's safety and well-being will be addressed, eliminated or reduced, and
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A *Plan for Independence* must describe the behavioural commitments of the youth, the responsibilities and promised acts of the youth and the director with any relevant timelines, as well as address the following areas:

- a place to live;
- family and friends;
- health: physical, mental, and alcohol & drugs issues;
- education/ meaningful work;
- social/ recreational/ cultural/ spiritual/religious/linguistic (in the case of aboriginal youth, information necessary to support and preserve the youth's aboriginal identity);
- legal;
- financial; and
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A *Plan for Independence* is the core clinically-focused document within a Youth Agreement that details the services and interventions that will meet the current needs and goals of a youth during the course of the Youth Agreement. The DYSW supports the youth in selecting attainable short-term goals from their *Youth Independence Planner* to be addressed in their upcoming *Plan for Independence*.



In selecting goals for an upcoming *Plan for Independence*, consideration should be given to the following:

- the most important goals to the youth (i.e., where the youth is motivated);
- goals that support the youth's safety and security;
- an appropriate number of goals that support a likelihood of success (e.g., sometimes fewer goals are better than too many in supporting a youth's experience of success);
- goals that are specific, measurable and can be monitored in some tangible fashion; and
- goals that have an attainable outcome with a reasonable likelihood of success within the period of the current Youth Agreement.

Not all sections of a *Plan for Independence* need to have active goals, but where there are none in a section, it should be stated explicitly (e.g., no current goals identified for this section).

### **Case Notes and File Recordings**

The DYSW also makes case notes and file recordings outlining decisions with reference to supporting information that identifies:

- the youth's longer term goals for transition to independence (e.g. train to be a baker).
- the youth's current goals for independent living to be supported through the anticipated Youth Agreement (e.g. live in an apartment).
- details of the services and supports the youth and youth worker have agreed upon to achieve the established goals for the anticipated Youth Agreement.
- a referral to a contracted youth worker for ongoing support.
- the responsibilities and actions required of the youth and others, including service providers, to achieve the goals under the plan and to monitor progress.
- details of arrangements for contact between parent and youth, when appropriate.
- details of back-up plans when a youth requires "after hours" services.

The longer-term goals from the *Youth Independence Planner*, case notes and file recordings are used to ensure successive Youth Agreements achieve desired long-term outcomes for the youth.

### **Special Considerations**

Additional information, supports and services may be necessary within a *Plan for Independence* to:

- preserve and support a youth's aboriginal identity.
- preserve a youth's culture, racial, linguistic and/or religious heritage.
- address the needs of sexually exploited youth (Refer to Practice Standard #27).
- be consistent with Youth Justice court orders (Refer to Practice Standard 28).
- address the special needs for additional healthcare and social support necessary for youth who are pregnant or young parents, and where appropriate, their dependent children.

## Housing Support Options

When determining housing supports for youth within a *Plan for Independence*, the DYSW considers the availability of the following options:

- residential treatment (e.g., Alcohol and Drug detox facilities);
- supported independent living through a contracted agency program (e.g., Alcohol and Drug Residential Support);
- semi-independent accommodation through an independent landlord, who provides limited, defined life skills support to the youth (e.g., enhanced room and board);
- subsidized youth housing;
- independent accommodation through an independent landlord.

## Shared Accommodation

Where a youth is planning to share accommodation with other person(s), the DYSW focuses on the best interests of the youth in determining that the intended living arrangements are reasonably safe and healthy for the youth. For information on cohabitation, refer to Practice Standard #26.

## Home Visits

### PRACTICE STANDARD 27

#### HOME VISITS

The DYSW must complete home visits with the youth present, and as required in the monitoring section of the *Plan for Independence*.

The DYSW must consider additional home visits if the youth's circumstances change significantly.

The minimum number of home visits that must be completed by the DYSW is as follows:

- the first home visit must occur within the first two weeks of the term of a Youth Agreement.
- at least one home visit must occur every three months during the term of a Youth Agreement.
- an additional home visit must occur during the first two weeks of a youth changing residence under a Youth Agreement.

In many circumstances, particularly at the beginning of a first Youth Agreement, more frequent or regular home visits with the youth by a contracted youth worker or the DYSW may be a proactive part of developing a supportive and safe *Plan for Independence*.

The number of home visits prescribed in a *Plan for Independence* can be changed through the use of a *Modification Agreement*.

## Monitoring Roles and Responsibilities

Monitoring roles and responsibilities within a *Plan for Independence* should be defined in the spirit of professional cooperation and according to the best practices of integrated case management. An emphasis is put on having the youth take on as much responsibility within the monitoring process as they are capable of doing successfully while maintaining the duty to support the youth's safety and well-being. For more information on integrated case management practice and information sharing among community partners, refer to the *Privacy Charter* and the *Integrated Case Management User's Guide* for the Ministry for Children and Families.

## Developing an Education/Training Program

The goal of a youth within a *Plan for Independence* may be to:

- develop an education/training program;
- carry out an education/training program (i.e., attend school or a training course); or
- develop and carry out an education/training program within the same Youth Agreement.

### PRACTICE STANDARD 13

#### DEVELOPING AN EDUCATION/TRAINING PROGRAM WITHIN THE PLAN FOR INDEPENDENCE

When the youth's goals related to education in their *Plan for Independence* involve public education programs, the DYSW must assist the youth in arranging to meet with local school district personnel who assess the current identified needs and goals of the youth and determine program placement.

As part of the youth's *Plan for Independence*, the DYSW must come to agreement with the youth about how the goals and the term of their education/training program will be monitored.

In consultation with the youth, the DYSW must share with education/ training personnel, relevant information about the youth that may indicate potential risk to the safety of the youth or other students and staff while attending an educational/training program.

## Training Consultants

The DYSW may assist the youth to access the services of training consultants, contracted agencies, and program-specific consultants who can assist in developing a training program that helps address the current identified training needs and goals of the youth.

Training and job readiness programs developed by training consultants with the Ministry of Social Development & Economic Security ("MSDES") involve the development of an approved *Employability Agreement*, and can only be accessed through a training consultant at MSDES.

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- residential treatment (e.g., Alcohol and Drug detox facilities);
- supported independent living through a contracted agency program (e.g., Alcohol and Drug Residential Support);
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- independent accommodation through an independent landlord.

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Where a youth is planning to share accommodation with other person(s), the DYSW focuses on the best interests of the youth in determining that the intended living arrangements are reasonably safe and healthy for the youth. For information on cohabitation, refer to Practice Standard #26.

## Home Visits

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#### HOME VISITS

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The DYSW must consider additional home visits if the youth's circumstances change significantly.

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In many circumstances, particularly at the beginning of a first Youth Agreement, more frequent or regular home visits with the youth by a contracted youth worker or the DYSW may be a proactive part of developing a supportive and safe *Plan for Independence*.

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In consultation with the youth, the DYSW must share with education/ training personnel, relevant information about the youth that may indicate potential risk to the safety of the youth or other students and staff while attending an educational/training program.

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Training and job readiness programs developed by training consultants with the Ministry of Social Development & Economic Security ("MSDES") involve the development of an approved *Employability Agreement*, and can only be accessed through a training consultant at MSDES.



## **School Contacts**

The youth (and where applicable, an accompanying youth worker) should meet with the school principal or designate to discuss the following items:

- a review of the youth's education/training program in the context of available placements within the school;
- how the education/training program will fit with a required *Student Learning Plan* that is developed by the school;
- assessment of the youth's readiness for available school programs;
- determination of a school program placement that best meets the current needs and readiness of the youth; and
- how the school will deal with the issues of reporting on attendance, student progress and disciplinary matters.

To register at a school within a school district, the youth meets residency requirements (without guardian consent) by providing school district personnel with the mailing address specified for the youth in their Youth Agreement.

## **Connecting Education/Training Program to Plan for Independence**

Education/training programs developed with the youth, the training consultant and/or school district personnel will be included in or attached to the current *Plan for Independence*.

Some education/training courses may have course fees that need factoring into the *Plan for Independence* and *Schedule A* for a youth.

## **Safety Issues at School**

If a youth plans to attend school, the DYSW assists the youth in meeting with the school principal or designate to discuss potential safety issues.

For details on sharing the personal information of a youth, refer to the *Privacy Charter* for the Ministry for Children and Families.



## Assisting Youth in Budgeting and Managing Money

### PRACTICE STANDARD 14

#### ASSISTING YOUTH IN BUDGETING AND MANAGING MONEY

The DYSW must prepare a financial budget with the youth that addresses the goals identified in the *Plan for Independence*, and that identifies spending limits set in the *CF&CS Payment Matrix* and the *Chart of Accounts* by completing a *Schedule A*.

As part of developing *Schedule A* of the *Plan for Independence*, the DYSW must complete a budget with the youth and agree upon shelter costs, support costs, education costs, and miscellaneous costs including security deposit, start-up costs and other one-time expenditures.

The DYSW must:

- explain clearly how the detailed mechanisms of expenditures will work, including one-time only expenditures and direct payments.
- explain the consequences of not managing money as agreed upon within the *Schedule A* and the *Plan for Independence*.

The youth and DYSW must agree on a schedule of payments which:

- is based on actual costs
- considers the youth's capacity to manage their finances and direct cash payments
- provides for direct payments wherever possible and appropriate to landlord, hydro, telephone, other utilities, tuition, etc.
- provides for daily, weekly, bi-weekly, mid-monthly or monthly payments to the youth as required to support the *Plan for Independence*.

For details on the *CF&CS Payment Matrix* and the *Chart of Accounts*, refer to Practice Standard #21.

#### Banking Accounts

To make payments directly to youth in most cases, youth will require a bank account. If required, the DYSW assists the youth in setting up a bank account. For information on identification requirements for setting up either a bank or credit union account, refer to the procedures on "Setting up Banking Accounts" (and direct deposit where applicable) in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual*.

#### Developing Money Management Skills

The DYSW assists the youth in developing skills and capacity to manage their finances independently by:

- providing or accessing ongoing one-to-one money management support/counseling (including assistance through the Credit and Debtor Assistance Branch should a youth be experiencing significant financial difficulties),
- providing access to youth group work focussed on money management, and/or
- directing the youth to life skills program.



## Assisting Youth in Budgeting and Managing Money

### PRACTICE STANDARD 14

#### ASSISTING YOUTH IN BUDGETING AND MANAGING MONEY

The DYSW must prepare a financial budget with the youth that addresses the goals identified in the *Plan for Independence*, and that identifies spending limits set in the *CF&CS Payment Matrix* and the *Chart of Accounts* by completing a *Schedule A*.

As part of developing *Schedule A* of the *Plan for Independence*, the DYSW must complete a budget with the youth and agree upon shelter costs, support costs, education costs, and miscellaneous costs including security deposit, start-up costs and other one-time expenditures.

The DYSW must:

- explain clearly how the detailed mechanisms of expenditures will work, including one-time only expenditures and direct payments.
- explain the consequences of not managing money as agreed upon within the *Schedule A* and the *Plan for Independence*.

The youth and DYSW must agree on a schedule of payments which:

- is based on actual costs
- considers the youth's capacity to manage their finances and direct cash payments
- provides for direct payments wherever possible and appropriate to landlord, hydro, telephone, other utilities, tuition, etc.
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- directing the youth to life skills program.

In the agreed schedule of payments, the DYSW may administer benefits to the youth weekly and increase the time between payments as the youth demonstrates the ability to manage their money.

The DYSW explains to the youth that advanced notification is required when changing residence to ensure payments go to the correct source and no interruption occurs in rental and/or utility payments/service.

### **One-Time Only Expenditures**

The DYSW reviews with the youth the important aspects of one-time only expenditures as follows:

- security deposit for shelter ("Security Deposits are Repayable Benefits" in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual* is provided to youth):
  - it is recoverable by the Ministry from the youth when the youth moves.
  - it is portable and may be applied to next rental (as specified in the security deposit information sheet for youth described above).
  - the youth is responsible for ensuring apartment is left clean with no damage.
  - significant property damage will trigger a review of the Youth Agreement.
- start-up costs for utility hook-ups are issued as required on a discretionary basis to support the youth to live safely within their accommodation.
- start-up costs for furnishings:
  - they are issued only at the beginning of a Youth Agreement.
  - items purchased belong to youth.
  - they will not be re-issued for the same items (i.e., if sold, disposed of or destroyed, will not be replaced).
  - the youth could be given assistance (usually through a contracted youth worker) in finding items at good value for money.
- based on the goals set out in the *Plan for Independence*, tuition, registration/course fees and books require a commitment on the part of the youth to attend and follow through to completion.
- other one-time only expenditures arise as required from goals identified in the *Plan for Independence*.

### **Agreement on Plans Cannot be Reached**

When the DYSW cannot agree upon a *Plan for Independence* with a youth, the worker may offer services to the youth, including referral to community agencies and services, where available.

If assessment indicates that the youth is at risk without Youth Agreement services and/or may need protection, the DYSW makes a report to Child Protection.

## Involving the Parent and Family

### PRACTICE STANDARD 15

#### INVOLVING THE PARENT AND FAMILY

The DYSW will involve the youth's family:

- to continue to explore all reasonable and available options within the family or family support system which would meet the youth's needs without the youth needing a Youth Agreement;
- in goals under a Youth Agreement for re-uniting or reconnecting the youth with family; and
- to support a commitment to their continuing guardianship role or providing financial and/or other supports to youth while in a Youth Agreement.

Wherever possible and appropriate, the youth's parent must be kept involved in decisions affecting the youth and informed in a timely manner about significant developments in the youth's life.

If a youth is in the Youth Services stream with Protection involvement, the DYSW consults with the case Protection worker regarding involvement and plans with parents and family.

Youth should be advised of the importance of maintaining family connections, and given every opportunity to keep parents involved in and informed about significant events relating to the youth. As appropriate, these may include:

- planning meetings (being informed about and participating in).
- changes in the youth's out-of-home living arrangements.
- significant events or accidents in the youth's life.
- any other items specified in the Youth Agreement.

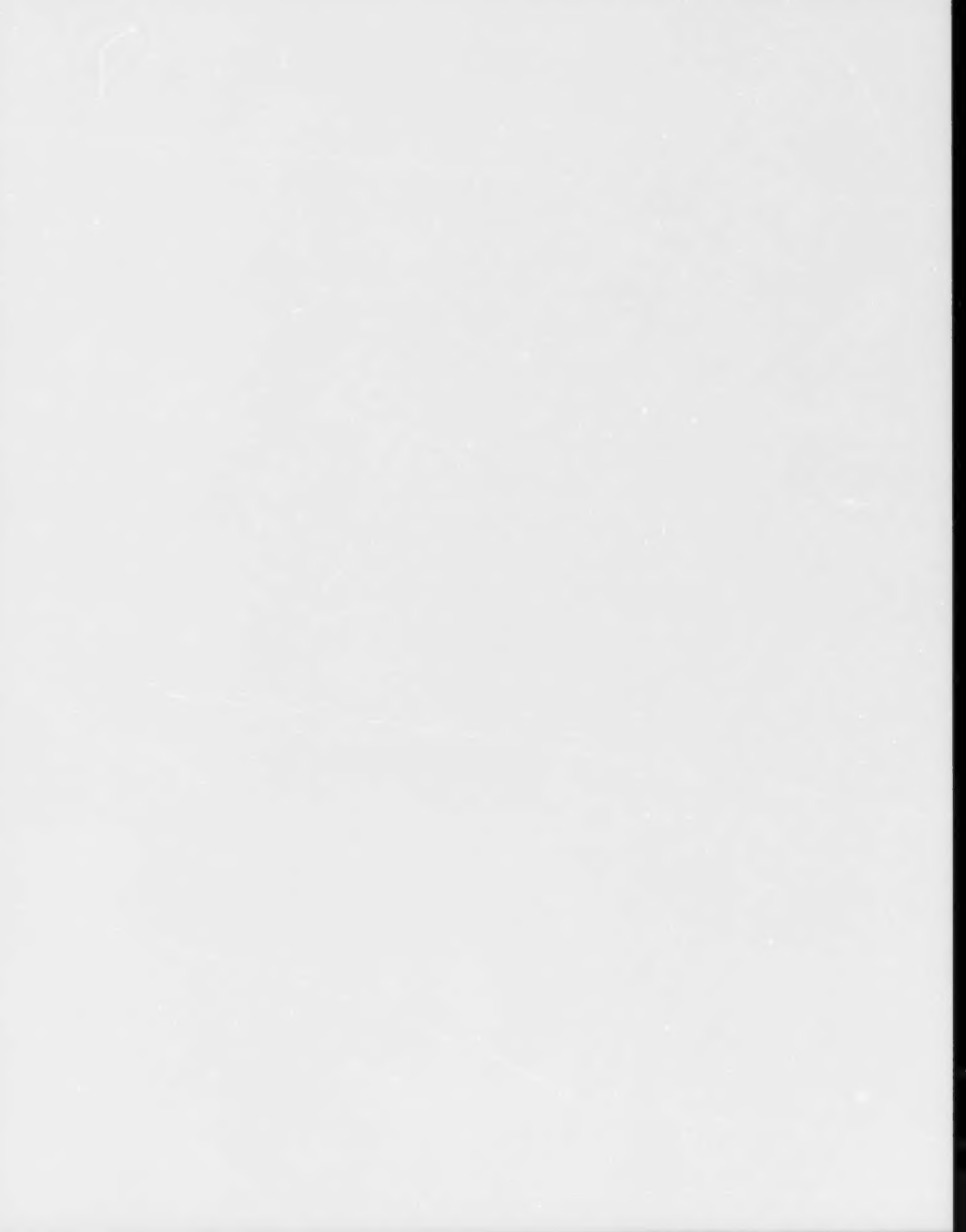
The DYSW attempts to contact and involve parents when the youth requires necessary health care, and the youth is unable to consent to such health care.

#### Out of Province Youth

For youth from out of province, an emphasis should be put on repatriation of youth back to their parents and family in their home province. Where applicable, contracted youth workers (e.g., Reconnect workers) may be contacted to assist with youth repatriation plans. For more information, refer to Practice Standards #2 and #6.

#### Public Trustee

The DYSW may wish to consider assisting a youth to contact the Public Trustee where settlement money, an inheritance, an inheritance in trust or income from an inheritance might benefit the youth during or following their time in a Youth Agreement.





## **Involving the Parent and Family**

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## If a Youth is Aboriginal

### PRACTICE STANDARD 16

#### ABORIGINAL YOUTH

Where a youth is aboriginal, the Youth Agreement must identify how the youth will be supported in preserving his/her cultural identity.

- The DYSW advises youth of services available through their aboriginal community.
- With the youth's consent, the DYSW contacts and involves the aboriginal community in the Youth Service assessment and in planning a Youth Agreement.
- If the DYSW does not have consent from youth for aboriginal community involvement, the DYSW considers the service delivery principles of the Act and determines whether an agreement can be made that is in the best interests of the youth without involving the aboriginal community.
- The DYSW considers available aboriginal services to reduce the youth's need for placement outside the youth's home under a Youth Agreement.
- If the youth resides on an Indian Reserve, or has access to off-reserve services from an aboriginal child welfare agency, the DYSW considers if a Youth Agreement can be provided by that agency.
- Youth Agreements with aboriginal youth, if identified so, may receive reimbursed funding from aboriginal communities (and Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Government). To identify youth in Youth Agreements as aboriginal for federal funding purposes, the DYSW follows special administrative procedures in "Coding Youth Agreements" in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual*.

## Preparing to Enter a Youth Agreement

### PRACTICE STANDARD 17

#### PREPARING TO ENTER A YOUTH AGREEMENT

Prior to signing a Youth Agreement, the DYSW must:

- obtain photocopied proof of the youth's identification.
- advise the youth to seek advice from an independent third party.
- explain to the youth, the expectations and requirements associated with signing a Youth Agreement.
- explain to the youth, the consent to disclosure of necessary personal and file information associated with signing a Youth Agreement.
- review terms of the Youth Agreement with the youth to ensure understanding of goals, youth commitments, and services provided.

Prior to signing a Youth Agreement, the youth and the DYSW must agree on:

- the term of the Youth Agreement specifying the start and end dates.
- the number of days notice required if the youth wishes to terminate the agreement.
- the number of days notice required if the director wishes to terminate the agreement.

This initial term of a Youth Agreement must not exceed 3 months.

The youth must receive a minimum of 7 days notice if the agreement is being terminated by the director.

With the youth and, where appropriate, the parent, the DYSW completes the final *Youth Agreement*, *Plan for Independence* and *Schedule A* in preparation for necessary approvals.

Entering into an initial agreement for the maximum period permitted is not necessarily in the youth's best interest. For renewals, refer to Practice Standard #24.

### Independent Third Party

Recommending that the youth seek independent third party advice prior to signing a Youth Agreement is required through Section 12.2 of the *CF&CS Act*, and considered both important and prudent since the youth is entering into a binding legal agreement. Non-performance according to the agreed upon goals, expectations and requirements outlined under a Youth Agreement has definitive consequences for the youth up to and including termination of the agreement.

An *independent third party* may be defined as anyone who is not involved with an agency that administers, delivers or provides services to the youth through a Youth Agreement. This person could be further characterized as someone with no conflict of interest, whose judgement the youth trusts and who will not financially benefit from the Youth Agreement (e.g., an aunt, a friend, a school counselor/teacher, a community program worker, a member of a community social group).

Independent third party advice does not imply legal advice.

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- If the DYSW does not have consent from youth for aboriginal community involvement, the DYSW considers the service delivery principles of the Act and determines whether an agreement can be made that is in the best interests of the youth without involving the aboriginal community.
- The DYSW considers available aboriginal services to reduce the youth's need for placement outside the youth's home under a Youth Agreement.
- If the youth resides on an Indian Reserve, or has access to off-reserve services from an aboriginal child welfare agency, the DYSW considers if a Youth Agreement can be provided by that agency.
- Youth Agreements with aboriginal youth, if identified so, may receive reimbursed funding from aboriginal communities (and Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Government). To identify youth in Youth Agreements as aboriginal for federal funding purposes, the DYSW follows special administrative procedures in "Coding Youth Agreements" in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual*.

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- explain to the youth, the consent to disclosure of necessary personal and file information associated with signing a Youth Agreement.
- review terms of the Youth Agreement with the youth to ensure understanding of goals, youth commitments, and services provided.

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- the term of the Youth Agreement specifying the start and end dates.
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This initial term of a Youth Agreement must not exceed 3 months.

The youth must receive a minimum of 7 days notice if the agreement is being terminated by the director.

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Independent third party advice does not imply legal advice.



## Maintenance Agreements and Orders

### PRACTICE STANDARDS

#### MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT REQUIREMENT

Where a youth's parent can be located, a Maintenance Agreement must be considered if it is determined that the parent is capable of contributing financially to the support of the youth while under a Youth Agreement.

Although a Maintenance Agreement must be considered wherever possible with the youth's parents, the Youth Agreement itself does not require a Maintenance Agreement being signed. As applicable, the DYSW will:

- Discuss with the youth's family their obligation to support their youth until the age of 19. Provide and review with the parent the pamphlet *Maintenance Agreements: A Guide for Parents* and the Information Sheet on Youth Agreements or comparable information provided by aboriginal child welfare agencies.
- If a youth moves from a Voluntary Care Agreement or a Special Needs Agreement to Youth Agreement, where maintenance agreements are in place, request a renewal of the Maintenance Agreement with the parent.
- Assess the family's ability to financially contribute to the youth's support. For procedures in pursuing a Maintenance Agreement, refer to *Practice Standards for Child Maintenance Agreements and Orders* to determine whether a parent is capable of contributing.
- Advise the parent that she or he will not receive the Federal Child Tax Benefit or the provincial Family Bonus benefits during the time the youth is under a Youth Agreement and advise the parent to contact Revenue Canada with any questions.
- Assess whether a maintenance agreement is in the youth's best interest.
- When parents are capable of contributing but refuse, consult with contracted legal counsel regarding the pursuit of a maintenance order.



## 6. Supervisor Approvals

The DYSW will require the approval of their supervisor before completing certain aspects of the Youth Agreement process.

### PRACTICE STANDARD 19

#### ROLE OF SUPERVISORS

DYSW must consult with their supervisors to seek review, approval and sign-off on the following:

- *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plans;*
- *Youth Agreements, Plans for Independence, and Schedule A's;*
- decisions/actions regarding Maintenance Agreements;
- amending through the use of a *Modification Agreement;*
- renewing a Youth Agreement; and
- terminating a Youth Agreement.

Supervisors reviewing and approving Youth Agreements and supporting documentation have received Youth Services delegation.

## 7. Entering into an Agreement

### Signing Agreements

### PRACTICE STANDARD 20

#### SIGNING AGREEMENTS

Following necessary approvals, the *Youth Agreement* and the *Plan for Independence* must be signed by the youth, the DYSW, and the DYSW's supervisor.

Following necessary approvals, a Maintenance Agreement, if applicable, must be signed by the DYSW and parent.

The agreements and services provided must take effect the first day of signing or after the date of signing the agreements.

The agreements and services provided must terminate on the end date noted in the agreements.

If a Maintenance Agreement is involved with the Youth Agreement, the end dates of the two agreements must be identical.

## Maintenance Agreements and Orders

### PRACTICE STANDARD IS

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- Assess the family's ability to financially contribute to the youth's support. For procedures in pursuing a Maintenance Agreement, refer to *Practice Standards for Child Maintenance Agreements and Orders* to determine whether a parent is capable of contributing.
- Advise the parent that she or he will not receive the Federal Child Tax Benefit or the provincial Family Bonus benefits during the time the youth is under a Youth Agreement and advise the parent to contact Revenue Canada with any questions.
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The agreements and services provided must take effect the first day of signing or after the date of signing the agreements.

The agreements and services provided must terminate on the end date noted in the agreements.

If a Maintenance Agreement is involved with the Youth Agreement, the end dates of the two agreements must be identical.

Upon completion, give a copy of the *Youth Agreement*, the *Plan for Independence* and the *Schedule A* to:

- the youth,
- the youth support worker, and
- the aboriginal community (if involved, and only with consent).

*Consent* means the consent of a youth to release of information.

Where applicable, only the parent receives a copy of a completed Maintenance Agreement form.

## Administering Benefits and Payments

### PRACTICE STANDARD 21

#### YOUTH AGREEMENT BENEFITS AND PAYMENTS

The benefits and payments outlined in Schedule A of Youth Agreements must be developed in accordance with the following:

- the schedule of benefits and spending authority requirements outlined in the Youth Agreement section of the *CF&CS Payment Matrix* in the *Accounting Procedures Manual*;
- the descriptors in the Youth Agreement service line and STOB's outlined in the *MCF Chart of Accounts*; and
- benefit and payment procedures (as outlined on the back of Youth Agreement forms).

Before issuing a damage deposit on behalf of a youth, the DYSW must complete a *Promise to Pay Security Deposit* form (CF0730) with the youth.

Youth Agreement service line descriptors from the *Chart of Accounts*, Youth Agreement forms with instructions, and the *CF&CS Payment Matrix* can be found in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual*.

### Youth Receiving Income Assistance through MSDES

For a youth receiving income assistance through MSDES, the DYSW refers to Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual* for considerations and procedures that may affect financial benefits and supports to the youth.

### Securing Residence with Landlords

To secure a place of residence for the youth, the DYSW may issue a "promise to pay" form letter to the landlord/agency providing rental accommodation.

### Payments to Suppliers and Youth

As specified in Schedule A, the DYSW sends *Direct Billing Utility Service Requests* to start direct payments with utility service providers for hydro/gas/heat, telephone, etc.

Direct payments, other than to landlords or utility service providers (which have specialized set-up forms), can be done using Purchase Documents (P-Docs), Purchase Cards, or other financial payment mechanisms authorized by Financial Services Branch in "Purchase Mechanisms", Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Implementation Planning Manual*.

The DYSW does not issue imprest cheques for Youth Service payments.

The DYSW only enters into third-party payments on behalf of the youth, if a written third-party agreement exists between the Ministry and a third party which authorizes such payments (e.g., BC Hydro).

### **Coding for Aboriginal Youth**

Youth Agreements with aboriginal youth, if identified so, may receive reimbursed funding from aboriginal communities (and Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Government). The DYSW follows administrative procedures in "Coding Youth Agreements" in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual* to assign agreement and project numbers, including special coding that identifies youth in Youth Agreements as aboriginal for federal funding purposes.

## **8. Monitoring, Reviewing and Renewing Agreements**

### **Monitoring a Youth Agreement**

#### **PRACTICE STANDARD 22**

##### **MONITORING A YOUTH AGREEMENT**

The DYSW must ensure that the *Youth Agreement* and *Plan for Independence* is closely monitored.

Monitoring must be evidence-based and involve regular reporting, verifying expectations and confirming actions through direct contact with the youth and involved professionals.

Through integrated case management process, the DYSW must confirm and follow up in writing to other involved professionals and service providers their role and responsibilities in monitoring and reporting on the youth's status and progress.

Monitoring must include regular meetings with the youth according to:

- home visits as stipulated within the *Plan for Independence* and Practice Standard #12;
- other terms stipulated in the youth's *Plan for Independence*; and
- significant circumstances and changes within the youth's life.

Determine the frequency of monitoring meetings with the youth:

- For the first three months of a Youth Agreement, schedule regular weekly face-to-face meetings.
- Concerns around the youth's progress may dictate a need for more frequent meetings.

If the youth is not fulfilling their monitoring commitments as specified within the *Plan for Independence*, the DYSW informs the youth of their non-performance and has grounds for reviewing and terminating the Youth Agreement.



Upon completion, give a copy of the *Youth Agreement*, the *Plan for Independence* and the *Schedule A* to:

- the youth,
- the youth support worker, and
- the aboriginal community (if involved, and only with consent).

*Consent* means the consent of a youth to release of information.

Where applicable, only the parent receives a copy of a completed Maintenance Agreement form.

## Administering Benefits and Payments

### PRACTICE STANDARD 21

#### YOUTH AGREEMENT BENEFITS AND PAYMENTS

The benefits and payments outlined in Schedule A of Youth Agreements must be developed in accordance with the following:

- the schedule of benefits and spending authority requirements outlined in the Youth Agreement section of the *CF&CS Payment Matrix* in the *Accounting Procedures Manual*;
- the descriptors in the Youth Agreement service line and STOB's outlined in the *MCF Chart of Accounts*; and
- benefit and payment procedures (as outlined on the back of Youth Agreement forms).

Before issuing a damage deposit on behalf of a youth, the DYSW must complete a *Promise to Pay Security Deposit* form (CF0730) with the youth.

Youth Agreement service line descriptors from the *Chart of Accounts*, Youth Agreement forms with instructions, and the *CF&CS Payment Matrix* can be found in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual*.

### Youth Receiving Income Assistance through MSDES

For a youth receiving income assistance through MSDES, the DYSW refers to Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual* for considerations and procedures that may affect financial benefits and supports to the youth.

### Securing Residence with Landlords

To secure a place of residence for the youth, the DYSW may issue a "promise to pay" form letter to the landlord/agency providing rental accommodation.

### Payments to Suppliers and Youth

As specified in Schedule A, the DYSW sends *Direct Billing Utility Service Requests* to start direct payments with utility service providers for hydro/gas/heat, telephone, etc.

Direct payments, other than to landlords or utility service providers (which have specialized set-up forms), can be done using Purchase Documents (P-Docs), Purchase Cards, or other financial payment mechanisms authorized by Financial Services Branch in "Purchase Mechanisms", Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Implementation Planning Manual*.



The DYSW does not issue imprest cheques for Youth Service payments.

The DYSW only enters into third-party payments on behalf of the youth, if a written third-party agreement exists between the Ministry and a third party which authorizes such payments (e.g., BC Hydro).

### **Coding for Aboriginal Youth**

Youth Agreements with aboriginal youth, if identified so, may receive reimbursed funding from aboriginal communities (and Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Federal Government). The DYSW follows administrative procedures in "Coding Youth Agreements" in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreement Regional Implementation Manual* to assign agreement and project numbers, including special coding that identifies youth in Youth Agreements as aboriginal for federal funding purposes.

## **8. Monitoring, Reviewing and Renewing Agreements**

### **Monitoring a Youth Agreement**

#### **PRACTICE STANDARD 22**

##### **MONITORING A YOUTH AGREEMENT**

The DYSW must ensure that the *Youth Agreement* and *Plan for Independence* is closely monitored.

Monitoring must be evidence-based and involve regular reporting, verifying expectations and confirming actions through direct contact with the youth and involved professionals.

Through integrated case management process, the DYSW must confirm and follow up in writing to other involved professionals and service providers their role and responsibilities in monitoring and reporting on the youth's status and progress.

Monitoring must include regular meetings with the youth according to:

- home visits as stipulated within the *Plan for Independence* and Practice Standard #12;
- other terms stipulated in the youth's *Plan for Independence*; and
- significant circumstances and changes within the youth's life.

Determine the frequency of monitoring meetings with the youth:

- For the first three months of a Youth Agreement, schedule regular weekly face-to-face meetings.
- Concerns around the youth's progress may dictate a need for more frequent meetings.

If the youth is not fulfilling their monitoring commitments as specified within the *Plan for Independence*, the DYSW informs the youth of their non-performance and has grounds for reviewing and terminating the Youth Agreement.

## Reviewing and Amending an Agreement

### PRACTICE STANDARD 23

#### REVIEWING AND AMENDING A YOUTH AGREEMENT

The agreement is reviewed with the youth and amended or terminated when:

- the agreement is no longer in the best interests of the youth.
- the agreement no longer meets the youth's needs.
- there is non-compliance with the terms of the agreement.
- there is a significant change in the youth's circumstances, including changes in the youth's out-of-home living arrangements.
- a less disruptive way of assisting the parent to care for the youth becomes available.

If a Youth Agreement requires substantial changes or amendments, it must be terminated and a new one developed.

A *Modification Agreement* must not be used to change the start or expiration dates of a Youth Agreement.

If a *Modification Agreement* affects the spending under a *Schedule A*, the DYSW must obtain approval from the required spending authority according to the *CF&CS Payment Matrix*.

A Youth Agreement may be reviewed at any time on the request of the youth or the DYSW.

Non-compliance with the terms of the Youth Agreements includes:

- the youth is ignoring their personal safety commitments specified within the *Plan for Independence*,
- the youth is engaging in high-risk behaviour or high-risk living arrangements counter to their personal safety commitments specified within the *Plan for Independence*, or
- the youth does not meet the goals, commitments and monitoring commitments specified within their *Plan for Independence*, and demonstrates lack of readiness to work within the terms set out in the *Youth Agreement*.

### Modification Agreements

Minor changes may be introduced into a *Youth Agreement* before the end of its term through completing a *Modification Agreement*.

When a *Modification Agreement* specifies changes to *Schedule A* direct payments (e.g., youth's place of residence changes), the DYSW:

- forwards *Modification Agreement* form to Financial Services Branch, and
- sends *Direct Billing Utility Service Requests* (as required) to start and terminate direct payments to ongoing service providers for hydro/gas/heat, telephone, etc.

## Reviewing an Agreement Prior to Expiration

At least two weeks prior to the expiration of an agreement, the DYSW meets with the youth to:

- review the youth's progress towards independence.
- review the youth's progress in managing the risks in their life.
- consider whether a less disruptive way of assisting the parent to care for the youth is now available and the agreement can be terminated.
- decide whether to renew the agreement.
- agree on the services required to assist the youth if the agreement is not renewed.

## Renewing an Agreement

### PRACTICE STANDARD 24

#### RENEWING A YOUTH AGREEMENT

A Youth Agreement renewal and the length of the agreement must be in the youth's best interests, and reflect the youth's capabilities, goals and needs.

A DYSW must determine whether to renew or terminate an agreement by using integrated case management involving a team of professionals, including a CPSW (if there is Protection involvement), who provide clinical consultation and/or client information to support decision-making.

For all youth prior to renewing a Youth Agreement, the DYSW must:

- ensure that the youth continues to meet the eligibility criteria for a Youth Agreement.
- advise the youth to seek advice from an independent third party.
- review with the youth the continuing expectations and requirements associated with signing a Youth Agreement.
- review terms of the Youth Agreement with the youth to ensure understanding of goals, youth commitments, and services provided.

When renewing a Youth Agreement with youth who are 18 years old, the DYSW must also ensure:

- a transition plan from youth services to adults services is incorporated into a *Plan for Independence*.
- the youth has been advised of the support and services available under Section 12.3 of the *CF&CS Act*, and knows how to apply for such services.
- the youth has been provided with any personal and contact information that may assist them in meeting their current and continuing needs as an adult in the community (e.g., health care coverage).

The term for renewing a Youth Agreement must not exceed 6 months.

The new *Youth Agreement*, *Plan for Independence*, *Schedule A*, and *Maintenance Agreement* (if applicable) must be developed, approved and signed as specified and required in Practice Standards #10 through #20.

If a youth is in a Youth Agreement with Protection Services involvement and renewal of the Youth Agreement does not occur, the DYSW must make a report to a CPSW.

## Reviewing and Amending an Agreement

### PRACTICE STANDARD 23

#### REVIEWING AND AMENDING A YOUTH AGREEMENT

The agreement is reviewed with the youth and amended or terminated when:

- the agreement is no longer in the best interests of the youth.
- the agreement no longer meets the youth's needs.
- there is non-compliance with the terms of the agreement.
- there is a significant change in the youth's circumstances, including changes in the youth's out-of-home living arrangements.
- a less disruptive way of assisting the parent to care for the youth becomes available.

If a Youth Agreement requires substantial changes or amendments, it must be terminated and a new one developed.

A *Modification Agreement* must not be used to change the start or expiration dates of a Youth Agreement.

If a *Modification Agreement* affects the spending under a *Schedule A*, the DYSW must obtain approval from the required spending authority according to the *CF&CS Payment Matrix*.

A Youth Agreement may be reviewed at any time on the request of the youth or the DYSW.

Non-compliance with the terms of the Youth Agreements includes:

- the youth is ignoring their personal safety commitments specified within the *Plan for Independence*,
- the youth is engaging in high-risk behaviour or high-risk living arrangements counter to their personal safety commitments specified within the *Plan for Independence*, or
- the youth does not meet the goals, commitments and monitoring commitments specified within their *Plan for Independence*, and demonstrates lack of readiness to work within the terms set out in the *Youth Agreement*.

### Modification Agreements

Minor changes may be introduced into a *Youth Agreement* before the end of its term through completing a *Modification Agreement*.

When a *Modification Agreement* specifies changes to *Schedule A* direct payments (e.g., youth's place of residence changes), the DYSW:

- forwards *Modification Agreement* form to Financial Services Branch, and
- sends *Direct Billing Utility Service Requests* (as required) to start and terminate direct payments to ongoing service providers for hydro/gas/heat, telephone, etc.

## Reviewing an Agreement Prior to Expiration

At least two weeks prior to the expiration of an agreement, the DYSW meets with the youth to:

- review the youth's progress towards independence.
- review the youth's progress in managing the risks in their life.
- consider whether a less disruptive way of assisting the parent to care for the youth is now available and the agreement can be terminated.
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- advise the youth to seek advice from an independent third party.
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- review terms of the Youth Agreement with the youth to ensure understanding of goals, youth commitments, and services provided.

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The new *Youth Agreement*, *Plan for Independence*, *Schedule A*, and *Maintenance Agreement* (if applicable) must be developed, approved and signed as specified and required in Practice Standards #10 through #20.

If a youth is in a Youth Agreement with Protection Services involvement and renewal of the Youth Agreement does not occur, the DYSW must make a report to a CPSW.



When renewing a Youth Agreement, the DYSW develops a *new Plan for Independence* according to the practices outlined in Practice Standards #10 through #16, and information gathered on the youth through monitoring and reviewing under previous Youth Agreements.

The maximum period allowed for agreements is not necessarily in the youth's best interests. Agreements should not last longer than is absolutely necessary.

If a Maintenance Agreement is also being renewed, the DYSW follows the practices and procedures outlined in Practice Standard #18.

If a youth is in a Youth Agreement with Protection Services involvement, the DYSW reviews with the CPSW whether the youth still requires Protection involvement. If the CPSW determines that the youth is no longer in need of protection, the youth may be moved to the Youth Services Stream without Protection Involvement, and the CPSW documents their decision with supporting information and closes the youth's Protective Family Service file.

## 9. Terminating an Agreement

### Preparing to Terminate an Agreement

#### PRACTICE STANDARD 25

##### PREPARING TO TERMINATE AN AGREEMENT

Prior to terminating a Youth Agreement, the DYSW must:

- review the reasons for terminating the agreement with the youth and obtain supervisor approval.
- ensure the youth has been advised of the Ministry complaint process.
- give the youth notice of termination as specified in the Youth Agreement either in writing, or verbally and confirmed in writing.
- advise the youth of other options and services that may be available to them to meet their needs.
- inform family of the pending termination if contact information is available.

Prior to termination, if a youth is in a Youth Agreement with Protection Services involvement, the DYSW must make a referral to a CPSW.

When preparing to terminate a youth agreement, the DYSW considers and advises the youth as required around the need to give landlord notice, to meet rental payment responsibility, and to transfer utilities into the youth's name.



## Terminating a Youth Agreement

### PRACTICE STANDARD 26

#### TERMINATING A YOUTH AGREEMENT

After preparing to terminate a Youth Agreement in Practice Standard #25, a Youth Agreement must be terminated by giving notice to the youth, as set out in the agreement, when:

- the youth is not fulfilling his/her commitments within the timelines outlined in the agreement's *Plan for Independence* and review mechanisms have not been successful.
- the circumstances that led to the youth needing assistance under an agreement have been resolved.
- the agreement is no longer in the youth's best interest.

A Youth Agreement is terminated whenever:

- the youth is taken into the care of the director.
- the agreement expires.
- the youth turns 19 years of age.
- the youth dies.
- the youth marries and is 16 years of age or over.
- regardless of age, cohabits with a person to whom the youth is married or with whom the youth has entered into a marriage-like relationship.
- the youth returns home.

When terminating a Youth Agreement, a DYSW must complete a closing summary on the Youth Service (CS) file.

The youth may terminate the agreement by notifying the director verbally or in writing within the time frame specified in the agreement.

In accordance with additional instructions and procedures in Section 'I' of the *Youth Agreements Regional Implementation Planning Manual*, when terminating a Youth Agreement (and associated Maintenance Agreements), the DYSW sends notices of Youth Agreement termination as follows:

- a *Youth Agreement Termination Notice* to the youth;
- a copy of the *Youth Agreement Termination Notice* to Financial Services Branch; and
- *Direct Billing Utility Service Requests* as required to utility service providers to stop any direct payments being made on behalf of the youth.

#### Marriage-like Relationships

A marriage-like relationship may include, but is not limited to, the following indicators: two people living together, physical/sexual intimacy, sleeping together, shared/unified responsibilities, unified financial activities, shared child-rearing, interdependency and a shared life vision.

When discerning between sharing accommodation and cohabiting in a marriage-like relationship, it is important to assess each situation based upon individual circumstances presented, and focus on the obvious presentation of the relationship. When the status of the relationship is not obvious, the best interests of the youth should be considered in determining whether the situation is a safe and healthy one for the youth.

When renewing a Youth Agreement, the DYSW develops a *new Plan for Independence* according to the practices outlined in Practice Standards #10 through #16, and information gathered on the youth through monitoring and reviewing under previous Youth Agreements.

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- the circumstances that led to the youth needing assistance under an agreement have been resolved.
- the agreement is no longer in the youth's best interest.

A Youth Agreement is terminated whenever:

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When discerning between sharing accommodation and cohabiting in a marriage-like relationship, it is important to assess each situation based upon individual circumstances presented, and focus on the obvious presentation of the relationship. When the status of the relationship is not obvious, the best interests of the youth should be considered in determining whether the situation is a safe and healthy one for the youth.

## 10. Special Considerations

### Sexually Exploited Youth

This section describes additional considerations given to those youth who may have been sexually abused through exploitation to further another person's gain, commercially and otherwise, across a continuum, not limited to:

- exchanging of sex for drugs, food, shelter, other basics of life, and/or money.
- provision of sex due to coercive acts (e.g., confinement, avoidance of violence or emotional abuse).
- child pornography and computer solicitation.
- involvement in a commercial sex trade.

In addressing sexual exploitation of youth, an effective approach requires a combined focus on:

- education and prevention;
- risk management and harm reduction;
- emergency and crisis intervention;
- support in healing and connecting with community; and
- short and long term exiting supports.

#### PRACTICE STANDARD 2

##### SEXUALLY EXPLOITED YOUTH

If a youth has indicated that they have been sexually exploited or are exiting the sex trade, the DYSW must:

- assess the youth's level of sexual exploitation and/or involvement in the sex trade;
- assess the youth's need for referrals to specialized support services such as safe housing, medical health, mental health, alcohol & drug, and victims of violence services;
- develop a safety plan with the youth that provides an integrated, collaborative and coordinated response involving police, Crown counsel, and other pertinent professionals;
- connect the youth to initiatives and programs that support exiting commercial sexual exploitation;
- give special consideration to relocating the youth in another community; and
- assess the youth's needs for protective intervention orders or restraining orders against pimps, customers and others who would inveigle, coerce or threaten the youth into the sex trade.

Prior to a youth entering into a Youth Agreement, a protective intervention order under Section 28 of the *CF&CS Act* must be obtained through a CPSW.

If a youth has entered a Youth Agreement through the Youth Services Stream with Protection Involvement, the DYSW must consult with the involved CPSW within 48 hours of applying for a restraining order under Section 98 of the *CF&CS Act*.

In order to determine and plan for the special needs of a sexually exploited youth, the DYSW supports the youth in completing the *Self Assessment – Sexual Exploitation* form.

Once a youth has entered into a Youth Agreement, the DYSW may obtain a restraining order under Section 98 of the *CF&CS Act* by following the procedures outlined in *Provincial Court (CF&CSA) Rules*.

## Youth Involved with Youth Justice

This section describes additional considerations given to those youth involved with Youth Justice.

### PRACTICE STANDARDS

#### YOUTH INVOLVED WITH YOUTH JUSTICE

For youth involved with youth justice, the provisions of the *Youth Agreement* and the *Plan for Independence* must be consistent with court orders.

If the youth refuses contact with their Youth Probation Officer and is in the Youth Services with Protection Services involvement, the DYSW must make a referral to a CPSW.

For youth who refuse contact with their Youth Probation Officer, the process for developing a Youth Agreement cannot be completed.

If the youth agrees to include their Youth Probation Officer in the assessment and development of a possible Youth Agreement, then proceed with the usual process of assessing for and developing a Youth Agreement, while incorporating youth justice considerations as required.



## 10. Special Considerations

### Sexually Exploited Youth

This section describes additional considerations given to those youth who may have been sexually abused through exploitation to further another person's gain, commercially and otherwise, across a continuum, not limited to:

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- provision of sex due to coercive acts (e.g., confinement, avoidance of violence or emotional abuse).
- child pornography and computer solicitation.
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In addressing sexual exploitation of youth, an effective approach requires a combined focus on:

- education and prevention;
- risk management and harm reduction;
- emergency and crisis intervention;
- support in healing and connecting with community; and
- short and long term exiting supports.

#### PRACTICE STANDARD 27

##### SEXUALLY EXPLOITED YOUTH

If a youth has indicated that they have been sexually exploited or are exiting the sex trade, the DYSW must:

- assess the youth's level of sexual exploitation and/or involvement in the sex trade;
- assess the youth's need for referrals to specialized support services such as safe housing, medical health, mental health, alcohol & drug, and victims of violence services;
- develop a safety plan with the youth that provides an integrated, collaborative and coordinated response involving police, Crown counsel, and other pertinent professionals;
- connect the youth to initiatives and programs that support exiting commercial sexual exploitation;
- give special consideration to relocating the youth in another community; and
- assess the youth's needs for protective intervention orders or restraining orders against pimps, customers and others who would inveigle, coerce or threaten the youth into the sex trade.

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Once a youth has entered into a Youth Agreement, the DYSW may obtain a restraining order under Section 98 of the CF&CS Act by following the procedures outlined in *Provincial Court (CF&CSA) Rules*.

## Youth Involved with Youth Justice

This section describes additional considerations given to those youth involved with Youth Justice.

### PRACTICE STANDARD 28

#### YOUTH INVOLVED WITH YOUTH JUSTICE

For youth involved with youth justice, the provisions of the *Youth Agreement* and the *Plan for Independence* must be consistent with court orders.

If the youth refuses contact with their Youth Probation Officer and is in the Youth Services with Protection Services involvement, the DYSW must make a referral to a CPSW.

For youth who refuse contact with their Youth Probation Officer, the process for developing a Youth Agreement cannot be completed.

If the youth agrees to include their Youth Probation Officer in the assessment and development of a possible Youth Agreement, then proceed with the usual process of assessing for and developing a Youth Agreement, while incorporating youth justice considerations as required.

## 11. Reportable Circumstances

### PRACTICE STANDARD 29

#### REPORTABLE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR YOUTH UNDER A YOUTH AGREEMENT

Where a youth has received services under a Youth Agreement in the last 12 months and that **youth dies or is critically injured**, the DYSW must report to the director within 24 hours, and ensure copies of the Reportable Circumstance Report are sent to DYSW's supervisor and manager (as well as the CPSW, if the youth is in a Youth Agreement with Protection involvement).

Where a youth is currently receiving services under a Youth Agreement, the DYSW must report to the director within 24 hours, and ensure copies are sent to their supervisor and manager when the following circumstances exist:

- suicide attempts;
- a serious injury or condition that may result in the youth's death or may cause serious or permanent impairment of the youth's health;
- serious incidents including the youth's involvement or exposure to life-threatening circumstances, crimes of violence, robbery or major property damage; or
- the youth is missing or runaway for more than 10 days.

## Missing Youth under a Youth Agreement

### PRACTICE STANDARD 30

#### REPORTABLE CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN YOUTH CANNOT BE CONTACTED

When a youth under a Youth Agreement cannot be contacted and whereabouts cannot be ascertained, the DYSW must assess the risk involved with the youth's current situation.

If following the assessment of the youth's risk, the DYSW determines that the youth's circumstances constitute a serious risk and a reportable circumstance, then the DYSW must:

- make a report to the police immediately;
- notify any youth workers who have had significant involvement with the youth;
- report to the director within 24 hours, and ensure copies of the Reportable Circumstance Report are sent to the DYSW's supervisor and manager (as well as the CPSW, if Youth Services stream with Protection involvement); and
- notify the youth's parents and other specified emergency contacts within 24 hours.

Refer to Practice Standard #29 for what constitutes a reportable circumstance for youth under a Youth Agreement.

To determine if a youth's absence constitutes a reportable circumstance, the DYSW:

- reviews all available relevant information pertaining to the youth including:
  - current file information,
  - consultation with the contracted youth worker and other involved professionals as required,
  - consultation with police and Crown counsel as required, and
- considers the following factors:
  - the youth's level of involvement or former involvement in the sex and/or drug trade.
  - current court action against a youth's former pimp where the youth may be subpoenaed to witness.
  - a drug case currently before the court where the youth may be subpoenaed to witness.
  - the youth's involvement in domestic violence with a violent former partner or spouse.
  - the involvement with violent crime, including gangs, severe indebtedness, and others seeking revenge.

# Appendix 1: Checklist for Deciding Whether to Use a Youth Agreement

Use the directions within the following checklist as applicable:

- ☐ Intake: Youth Service (CS) file is opened, basic youth intake information is completed, and Prior Contact Check is completed.
- ☐ Intake decision made and action completed, with referrals completed as required.
- ☐ Copies of youth identification are obtained, or if required, youth is supported in obtaining identification.
- ☐ Consultations with CPSW or MSDES workers completed if required.
- ☐ Supporting information that accompanies referrals is attached and cross-referenced.
- ☐ If proceeding with Youth Services, the *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment & Safety Plan* is completed to support the youth while considering a Youth Agreement.
- ☐ Special considerations have been taken into account for sexually exploited youth, youth involved with Youth Justice, and youth who are expectant parents or parents.
- ☐ Repatriation has been considered in meeting the youth's immediate needs and safety.
- ☐ *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan* is signed by both youth and DYSW.
- ☐ Required immediate interim supports have been provided, and referrals to youth support services are completed as agreed upon.
- ☐ *Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan* is approved by supervisor.
- ☐ Contact names for family, extended family and/or others involved with youth have been obtained from the youth.
- ☐ Information from youth contacts is gathered on file, and is summarized on *Preparing for Triage* form.
- ☐ Youth Service Triage assessment is completed with one of three service streams selected, including service recommendations, appropriate referrals and completion of Risk Decisions as required (using *Outcomes/Recommendations from Triage* form).
- ☐ Youth Service continues only if the outcome of Triage Assessment is either the Youth Services stream with Protection involvement, or Youth Services stream without Protection involvement.
- ☐ Family/ extended family assessment is completed, as appropriate, according to *CF&CS Policy Manual, Volume 2A, 1.3 Family Assessment*.
- ☐ No less disruptive alternative is available and appropriate to assist the youth.
- ☐ The plan to have the youth enter a Youth Agreement is in the youth's best interest.
- ☐ It appears a plan for independence can be developed that realistically outlines the return of a youth to her/his parent, or supports transition to independence.
- ☐ The services offered to the youth under the agreement are adequate, available and likely to help maintain or restore a safe, stable environment for the youth.

- ☐ The youth is committed, ready and able to participate in services as part of the agreement.
- ☐ Consider the youth's views, and the youth indicates that she or he feels safe with the idea of living independently.
- ☐ *Assessment of Youth's Ability to Enter Youth Agreement* is completed.
- ☐ Youth's eligibility to enter a Youth Agreement is confirmed and supporting information placed on file.
- ☐ *Consent to Disclosure of Information* (CF0609) is completed as required.

## Appendix 2: Checklist for Preparing an Agreement

Use the directions within the following checklist as applicable:

- ☐ All assessment and pertinent information (e.g., reports, court orders, and previous files) has been gathered and reviewed.
- ☐ Decisions and rationale for using a Youth Agreement for risk reduction and long term planning have been documented.
- ☐ The youth has completed a *Youth Independence Planner*, and the DYSW has reviewed it with the youth.
- ☐ A *Plan for Independence* can be developed and agreed upon with the youth, including establishing goals and identifying means to achieve those goals.
- ☐ Services offered in an agreement are confirmed as available.
- ☐ Special considerations have been taken into account for: sexually exploited youth; youth involved with Youth Justice; the youth's culture, racial, linguistic and/or religious heritage; and youth who are expectant parents or parents.
- ☐ Parental involvement and re-connection within a Youth Agreement has been considered where appropriate.
- ☐ If the youth is aboriginal, determination has been made with the youth whether to involve the aboriginal community.
- ☐ A schedule of home visits has been developed within the *Plan for Independence*.
- ☐ Monitoring roles and responsibilities have been carefully considered.
- ☐ As required, an education/training program has been developed collaboratively with the youth and community partners.
- ☐ A financial budget has been completed using a *Schedule A*.
- ☐ One-time only expenditures have been explained to the youth.
- ☐ As required, the youth has been assisted in setting up a bank account.
- ☐ Supports are in place to assist the youth in developing and reviewing money management skills.
- ☐ If agreement on a plan cannot be reached, appropriate referrals are made, including a report to Child Protection if required.
- ☐ Youth has been advised to seek advice from an independent third party prior to signing *Youth Agreement*.
- ☐ Terms, expectations and requirements of *Youth Agreement* have been explained to youth.
- ☐ Number of days notice agreed upon for the youth to give notice and receive notice.
- ☐ Start and end dates of *Youth Agreement* have been agreed upon.
- ☐ Complete a *Youth Agreement* form (CF0700) and the *Schedule A* form (CF0702).
- ☐ Decisions and actions regarding pursuing a Maintenance Agreement or Maintenance Order have been completed and documented for review.
- ☐ Supervisor has approved the *Youth Agreement* (including *Plan for Independence* and *Schedule A*) and Maintenance Agreement (if applicable).
- ☐ Necessary approvals have been obtained for Schedule A according to the *CF&CS Payment Matrix*.
- ☐ *Consent to Disclosure of Information* (CF0609) is completed as required.



- ☐ If approvals obtained, the Youth Agreement is signed with the youth.
- ☐ Provide a copy of the all agreement forms to the youth and, with consent, the contracted youth worker.
- ☐ A "Promise to Pay Security Deposit" form has been completed with the youth, and youth has been provided with Information Sheet on security deposits.
- ☐ When securing a place of residence for the youth, a "promise to pay" form letter to the landlord/agency has been issued as required.
- ☐ The *Plan for Independence* form and the *Youth Agreement* form includes information on where the youth will reside.
- ☐ The new *Youth Agreement* form and *Schedule A* is forwarded to Financial Services Branch, Accounts Payable Program Payments, P.O. Box 9760 Stn Prov Gov, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 765 Broughton Street, Victoria B.C. V8W 9S4 and *Maintenance Agreement* form to Financial Services Branch, PO Box 9760 Stn Prov Gov, Victoria V8W 9S4. The *Plan for Independence* form (CF0703) is **not** sent to Financial Services Branch.
- ☐ As specified in Schedule A of the Youth Agreement, form letters are sent to start direct payments to ongoing utility service providers for hydro/gas/heat, telephone, etc. using the *Direct Billing Utility Service Request* form.
- ☐ The parent(s) are advised that they are not eligible to receive the Federal Child Tax Benefit or the provincial Family Bonus benefits for the youth from the first day of the month following the youth entering an agreement, and that the federal government may require the parent to return any money received for these benefits after that date. For further information, the parents are advised to contact Revenue Canada.
- ☐ If applicable, parent(s) are provided with copies of their Maintenance Agreements.

## Appendix 3: Checklist for Monitoring, Reviewing and Renewing an Agreement

Use the directions within the following checklist as applicable:

- ☐ Evidence-based, face-to-face monitoring is being conducted according to terms of the agreement and in circumstances that support the youth's best interests.
- ☐ A new *Youth Agreement* or a *Modification Agreement* is signed with the youth.
- ☐ When a *Modification Agreement* specifies changes to *Schedule A* payments, the approvals of necessary spending authorities have been obtained according to the *CF&CS Payment Matrix*.
- ☐ When a *Modification Agreement* specifies changes to *Schedule A* direct payments (e.g., youth's place of residence changes), the *Modification Agreement* form is forwarded to Financial Services Branch, and letters are sent as required to start and terminate direct payments to ongoing service providers for rent, hydro/gas/heat, telephone, etc.
- ☐ The youth's situation has been reviewed at least two weeks before the agreement expires.
- ☐ The renewal is completed at least two weeks before the existing agreement expires to ensure that the youth continues to receive payment and that the parents are correctly billed for maintenance.
- ☐ Youth's progress has been reviewed and a new *Plan for Independence* completed using Practice Standards.
- ☐ When renewing a *Youth Agreement* with youth who are 18 years old, a transition plan to adults services into a new *Plan for Independence* is incorporate, the youth is advised of the support and services available under Section 12.3 of the *CF&CS Act*, and personal and contact information is provided for adult services in the community (e.g., health care coverage).
- ☐ The DYSW supervisor has approved the renewal.
- ☐ The new *Youth Agreement* form and *Schedule A* is forwarded to Financial Services Branch, Accounts Payable Program Payments, PO Box 9760 Stn Prov Gov, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 765 Broughton Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 9S4. Do not send *Plan for Independence* form (CF0703) to Financial Services Branch.
- ☐ A new *Maintenance Agreement* (if required) is signed with the parent.
- ☐ *Maintenance Agreement* form is forwarded to Financial Services Branch, PO Box 9760 Stn Prov Gov, Victoria, BC, V8W 9S4.

## Appendix 4: Checklist for Terminating an Agreement

Use the directions within the following checklist as applicable:

- ☐ Using the terms of the actual Youth Agreement in conjunction with Practice Standard 20, the reasons for terminating the agreement have been reviewed with the youth.
- ☐ Supervisor approval has been obtained.
- ☐ The youth has been advised of the Ministry complaint process.
- ☐ The youth has been given notice of termination as specified in the *Youth Agreement* either in writing, or verbally and confirmed in writing.
- ☐ The youth has been advised of other options and services that may be available to them to meet their needs.
- ☐ The youth's family has been informed of the pending termination if contact information is available.
- ☐ If a youth is in a Youth Agreement with Protection Services involvement, a referral has been made to a CPSW.
- ☐ A closing summary has been completed on the Youth Service (CS) file.
- ☐ A report on Reportable Circumstances has been completed, as required.
- ☐ *Direct Billing Utility Service Requests* have been sent to service providers receiving ongoing direct payments through the Schedule A of the Youth Agreement for rent, hydro/gas/heat, telephone, etc.
- ☐ For termination of a Youth Agreement (and associated Maintenance Agreements), copies of termination notices to youth and service providers have been sent to Financial Services Branch, Accounts Payable Program Payments, PO Box 9760 Stn Prov Gov, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 765 Broughton Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 9S4.